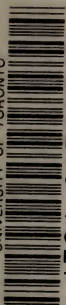


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MEMOIRS

OF

CELEBRATED

FEMALE SOVEREIGNS;

BY MRS. JAMESON,

AUTHORESS OF THE "DIARY OF AN ENNUYÉE," &c.

"Nous sommes faites pour embellir le monde, plutôt que pour le commander."—MADAME ROLAND.

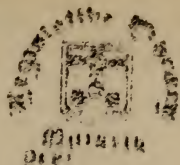
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1831.



Coll. Brog.

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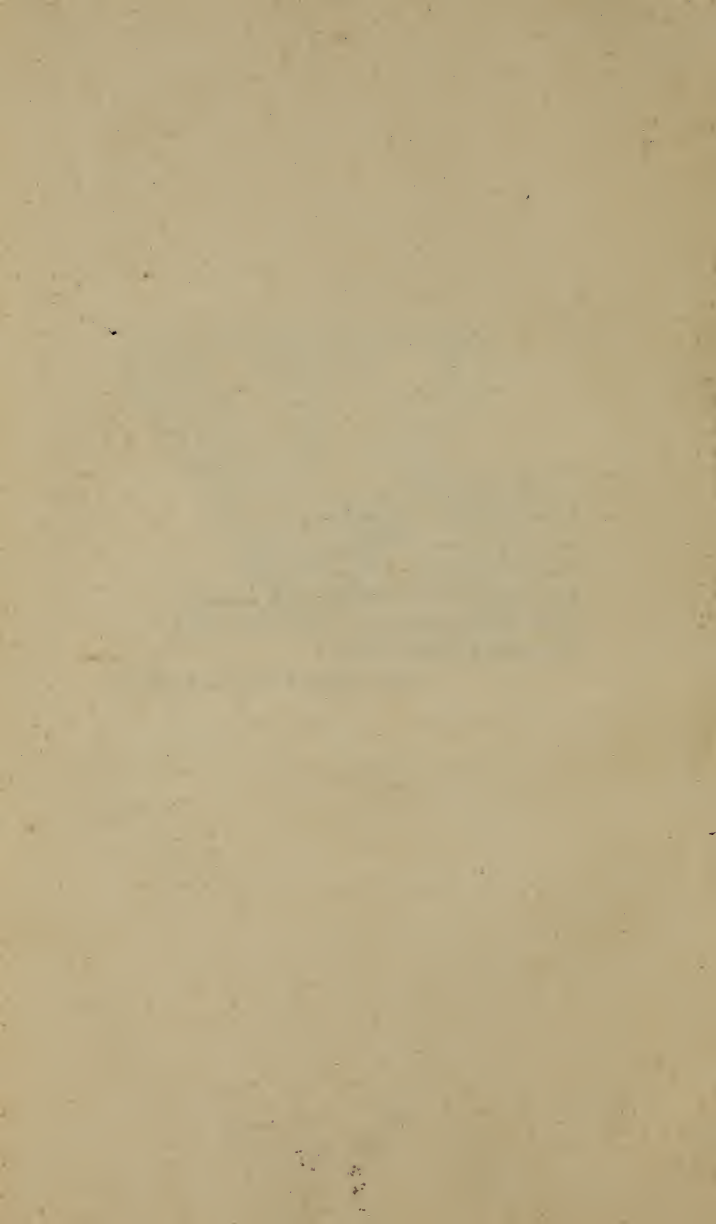


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—By my troth
I would not be a queen!—

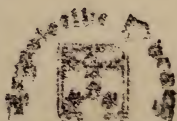
—————Verily,
I swear, 'tis better to be lowly born,
And range with humble livers in content,
Than to be perk'd up in a glistening grief,
And wear a golden sorrow!

King Henry VIII. Act 2, Sc 3



P R E F A C E.

THE intention of this work is to present in a small compass and at one view, an idea of the influence which a female government has had, *generally*, on men and nations, and of the influence which the possession of power has had *individually* on the female character. If it should be criticised as being too brief, perhaps it will also be recollected, that it would have been far easier to write such a work in twenty volumes than in two; but in that case, “ the latter end of the history would certainly have forgotten the beginning ;” and the principal object, that of presenting a general *coup-d’œil*



which might be grasped by the mind at once, would have been defeated altogether.

Perhaps the title of the work should have been properly, “Comparative Sketches,” or “Memorials” of celebrated Female Sovereigns, rather than *Memoirs*: for the didactic form of history or biography has not always been adhered to; incidents and characters are not here treated in a political and historical, but in a moral and picturesque, point of view; and public affairs and national events, which are detailed in the usual works of authority, are not dwelt upon except as connected with the destiny, or emanating from the personal and private character—the passions and prejudices of the individual sovereign.

From the ideas which I know to be entertained by well informed persons, it should seem that the manner in which we are *driven* through a course of history as part of our early education, might be amended; the memory is loaded to repletion with facts, dates, and names; meantime, some of the best faculties of the mind, which might well be exercised on these subjects, remain dormant; the

natural judgment is surrendered to mere words, producing prejudices and false associations which tinge our feelings and opinions during our whole lives. It may be added, that the moral sense runs some risk of being perverted by the manner in which we misapply habitually and by prescriptive custom certain epithets. For why, it may be asked, are victories always *glorious*, always *splendid*? Why must our sympathies be always enlisted on the side of successful ambition? Why must criminal or all-grasping power be ever exhibited under an aspect of greatness, when surely there is a reverse of the impression producing a far deeper and more useful lesson? Why (and this is a most serious evil,) should the young, the pure, the feminine mind, just expanding to the sense of truth and beauty and goodness, be early polluted by relations of profligacy and cruelty, horrible and physical tortures, such as are too fully and grossly detailed in some of our most esteemed histories? If under the idea of inspiring a just horror for these things, it is as if we should teach our children humanity by intro-

ducing them into the shambles. Instances might be given of the painful and injurious effect produced on youthful and feeling minds by certain passages of history, stronger, more lasting, and far more baneful than by any absurd romance or fairy-tale, or any of the banished superstitions and goblins of the nursery. These reflections may seem beside the present subject, and would lead us too far.—It would be presumption to say that in this little work I have been able to avoid entirely the objections to which I have alluded; but, at least, those great moral truths which are based on our religion as Christians, and lead to our best views of duty and happiness, are not lost sight of: and in estimating the characters and events which are here rapidly portrayed rather than narrated, I do not wish to dictate opinions, but by enabling the young reader of history to recall and arrange previous impressions, to afford some new materials for thought and comparison.

There may be a difference of opinion as to whether women ought, or ought not, to be entrusted with the executive government of a country;

but if, in a very complicated and artificial system of society, the rule of a woman be tolerated or legalized as a necessary evil, for the purpose of avoiding worse evils arising from a disputed succession and civil commotions,—then it remains a question how far the feminine character may be so modified by education, as to render its inseparable defects as little injurious to society, and its peculiar virtues as little hurtful to herself, as possible. Women, in possession of power, are so sensible of their inherent weakness, that they are always in extremes. Hence, among the most arbitrary governments recorded are those of women. They substitute for the dominion of that superior strength, mental and physical, which belongs to the other sex, and with which should rest “all lawful rule and right supremacy,” the mere force of *will*; and call that *power* which is founded in weakness. Christina of Sweden has left a memorable sentence under her own royal hand, which may serve as a commentary on the threadbare adage, “when women reign, men govern.” Thus she writes—for it is but just

to give her own words :—" Quand j'étais en mon royaume, j'avais nombre de conseillers et de ministres, que je consultais tous, et dont j'entendais les avis : mais moi seule je pris les résolutions de moi-même à ma façon, tant dans les grandes choses que dans les moindres affaires ; et je ne requérais autre chose de mes serviteurs et ministres qu'une aveugle obéissance, avec laquelle ils executaient mes décrets sans repliche. J'étais seule la maîtresse absolue, et je voulais l'être, et je savais l'être par la grace de Dieu. L'Empereur, la Suède, et tout le monde savent tout cela. Il est vrai, qu'à l'heure qu'il est, j'ai changé de fortune, mais pas de sentiment. Je fais à present en petit, ce que je faisais alors en grand ;"* &c.

Ludicrous as this may sound in so many words, we have here the true feminine idea of empire,—viz. the privilege of saying *je le veux* : and, however modified by the character of the individual,—

* Letter to Bonvisi, the Apostolic Nuncio at Vienna, in 1677.—(V. Correspondence de Christine.) The constitution of Sweden at the time of Christina's accession was that of a free state, or limited monarchy.

however dissembled—for all had not the frank audacity of Christina,—we may trace the same feeling, the same principle of action, in every woman who has either inherited power, or achieved political greatness ; and not more in the acute Elizabeth, and the haughty energetic Catherine, than in the stupid, heartless Anne, and the amiable Maria-Theresa.

On the whole, it seems indisputable that the experiments hitherto made, in the way of female government, have been signally unfortunate ; and that women called to empire have been, in most cases, conspicuously unhappy or criminal. So that, were we to judge by the past, it might be decided at once, that the power which belongs to us, as a sex, is not properly, or naturally, that of the sceptre or the sword.

MEMOIRS

CONTAINED

IN THE FIRST VOLUME.

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CELEBRATED FEMALE SOVEREIGNS.

SEMIRAMIS.

SEMIRAMIS, Queen of Assyria, is the first female sovereign upon record who ever held undivided empire. All the accounts which have come down to us concerning this celebrated queen, are mixed up with so much exaggeration, absurdity, and mythological fiction, that she may be considered partly a fabulous, and partly an historical personage. As beheld through the long lapse of ages, and in the dim distance of primeval time, with all her gorgeous and Babylonish associations around her, Semiramis appears to our fancy rather as a colossal emblem of female sovereignty, overshadowing the East, than as a real and distinct individual; yet, that such a woman did once exist, is more than probable; and her

name has been repeated from age to age, till it has become so illustrious, and her exploits and character so frequently alluded to in history, in poetry, and in the arts, that it is obviously necessary to be acquainted with the traditions respecting her;—though quite unnecessary to give implicit credit to the relation of events, resting on such vague, remote, and doubtful testimony, that, if it be difficult to believe, it is impossible to confute them. The time at which Semiramis lived is a matter of dispute; and the authorities vary so extravagantly, that we are tempted to exclaim with Bryant, “What credit can possibly be given to the history of a person, the period of whose existence cannot be ascertained within 1500 years?” Yet so universal a celebrity must surely have had some foundation in truth.

According to Rollin, Semiramis flourished about 1950 years before the Christian era; that is, about 400 years after the Flood, and nearly about the time of Abraham. Other chronologists, with far more probability, place her reign about 600 years later; thus making her nearly contemporary with Gideon, Judge of Israel, and Theseus, King of Athens.

She was born at Ascalon, in Syria, and was the wife of Menones, one of the generals of Ninus, King of Assyria. At the siege of Bactria, whither

she accompanied her husband, she distinguished herself by her prudence and courage, and through her sagacity the city was at length taken after a protracted siege. She discovered a weak part in the fortifications, and led some soldiers up a by-path by night, by which means the walls were scaled and the city entered. Ninus, struck with her wisdom and her charms, entreated her husband to resign Semiramis to him, offering his daughter, the Princess Sosana, in exchange, and threatening to put out the eyes of the husband if he refused. Menones, seeing the king resolved on his purpose, and the lady in all probability nothing loth, and unable to determine between the alternatives presented to him, the loss of his eyes, or the loss of his wife, hung himself in a fit of jealousy and despair, and Ninus immediately afterwards married his widow. Semiramis became the mother of a son named Ninias, and the king dying soon afterwards, bequeathed to her the government of his empire during the minority of her son. We have another version of this part of the story of Semiramis, which has afforded a fine subject for poets and satirists. It is recorded that Ninus, in the extravagance of his dotage, granted to his young and beautiful queen the absolute sovereignty of his empire for a single day. He seated her on his regal throne,

placed his signet on her finger, commanded the officers of state and courtiers to do her homage, himself setting the first example, and her decrees during that brief space of time were to be considered absolute and irrevocable. Semiramis, with equal subtlety and audacity, instantly took advantage of her delegated power, and ordered her husband to be first imprisoned and then strangled; a punishment which his folly would almost have deserved from any other hand. She declared herself his successor, and contrived to retain the supreme power during the remainder of her life. She was twenty years of age when she assumed the reins of empire, and resolved to immortalize her name by magnificent monuments and mighty enterprises. She is said to have founded the city of Babylon, or at least to have adorned it with such prodigious and splendid works, that they ranked among the wonders of the world. When we read the accounts of the "Great Babylon," of its walls and brazen gates, its temples, bridges, and hanging gardens, we should be inclined to treat the whole as a magnificent fiction of poetry, if the stupendous monuments of human art and labour, still remaining in India and Upper Egypt, did not render credible the most extravagant of

these descriptions, and prove on what a gigantic scale the ancients worked for immortality. We are also told that amongst the edifices erected by her, was a mausoleum to the memory of the king, her husband, adjoining the great Tower of Babel, and adorned with statues of massive gold. When Semiramis had completed the adornment of her capital, by the most wonderful works of art, she undertook a progress through her vast empire, and everywhere left behind her glorious memorials of her power and her benevolence. It seems to have been an article of faith amongst all the writers of antiquity, that Assyria had never been so great and so prosperous as under the dominion of this extraordinary woman. She built enormous aqueducts, connected the various cities by roads and causeways, in the construction of which she levelled hills and filled up valleys; and she was careful, like the Imperial conqueror of modern times, to inscribe her name, and the praises of her own munificence, on all these monuments of her greatness. In one of these inscriptions she gives her own genealogy, in a long list of celestial progenitors; which shows that, like some other monarchs of the antique time, she had the weakness to disown her plebeian origin, and wished to lay claim to a divine and fictitious parentage.

“ My father was Jupiter Belus,
My grandfather, Babylonian Saturn,
My great grandfather, Ethiopian Saturn,
My great-grandfather’s father, Egyptian Saturn,
And my great-grandfather’s grandfather,
Phœnix Cœlus Ogyges.”

After reading this high-sounding catalogue of grandfathers and great-grandfathers, it is amusing to recollect that Semiramis has left posterity in some doubt whether she herself ever had a real existence, and may not be, after all, as imaginary a personage as any of her shadowy, heaven-sprung ancestors.

There is another of the inscriptions of Semiramis, which is in a much finer spirit.

“ Nature bestowed on me the form of a woman ; my actions have surpassed those of the most valiant of men. I ruled the empire of Ninus, which stretched eastward as far as the river Hyhanam ; southwards to the land of incense and of myrrh ; and northwards to the country of the Scythians and the Sogdians: before me, no Assyrian had seen the great sea ; I beheld with my own eyes four seas, and their shores acknowledged my power : I constrained the mighty rivers to flow according to my will, and I led their waters to fertilize lands that had been before barren and without inhabitants. I raised impregnable towers, I constructed paved roads in ways hitherto untrodden but by the beasts of the forest, and in the midst of these mighty works I found time for pleasure and for friendship.”

We are told that Semiramis was extremely active and vigilant in the administration of her

affairs. One morning, as she was dressing, information was brought to her that a rebellion had broken out in the city; she immediately rushed forth, half-attired, her hair floating in disorder, appeased the tumultuous populace by her presence and her eloquence, and then returned to finish her toilette.

Not satisfied with being the foundress of mighty cities, and sovereign over the greatest empire of the earth, Semiramis was ambitious of military renown. She subdued the Medes, the Persians, the Libyans, and the Ethiopians, and afterwards determined to invade India. She is the first monarch on record who penetrated beyond the Indus;—for the expedition of Bacchus is evidently fabulous. The amount of her army appears to us absolutely incredible. She is said to have assembled three millions of foot soldiers and five hundred thousand cavalry; and as the strength of the Indians consisted principally in the number of their elephants, she caused many thousand camels to be disguised and caparisoned like elephants of war, in hopes of deceiving and terrifying the enemy by this stratagem. Another historian informs us that she constructed machines in the shape of elephants, and that these machines were moved by some mechanical contrivance, which was worked by a single man in the interior of

each. The Indian king or chief, whose name was Stabrobates, hearing of the stupendous armament which was moving against him, sent an ambassador to Semiramis, demanding who and what she was? and why, without any provocation, she was come to invade his dominions? To these very reasonable enquiries the Assyrian queen haughtily replied, “Go to your king, and tell him I will myself inform him who I am, and why I am come hither.” Then rushing onwards at the head of her swarming battalions, she passed the river Indus in spite of all opposition, and advanced far into the country, the people flying before her unresisting, and apparently vanquished. But having thus insidiously led her on till she was surrounded by hostile lands, and beyond the reach of assistance from her own dominions, the Indian monarch suddenly attacked her, overwhelmed her mock elephants by the power and weight of his real ones, and completely routed her troops, who fled in all directions. The queen herself was wounded, and only saved by the swiftness of her Arabian steed, which bore her across the Indus; and she returned to her kingdom with scarce a third of her vast army. We are not informed whether the disasters of this war cured Semiramis of her passion for military glory; and all the researches of antiquarians have not enabled us to

distinguish the vague and poetical from the true, or, at least, the probable events in the remainder of her story. We have no account of the state of manners and morals during her reign; and of the progress of civilization we can only judge by the great works imputed to her. Among the various accounts of her death, the following is the most probable:—An Oracle had foretold, that Semiramis should reign until her son Ninias conspired against her; and after her return from her Indian expedition, she discovered that Ninias had been plotting her destruction. She immediately called to mind the words of the oracle, and without attempting to resist his designs, abdicated the throne at once, and retired from the world; or, according to others, she was put to death by her son, after a reign of forty-two years. The Assyrians paid her divine honours under the form of a pigeon.

In her private life, Semiramis has been represented as a monster of profligacy. We are told that she had a succession of lovers, who were devoted one after another to death; and that her son slew her, at length, as the only means of avoiding even a worse crime.

These accounts are rejected by other authors as fabulous. It appears, however, that among the magnificent works and great achievements imputed to Semiramis, no one virtue, no trait of

feminine feeling has been recorded by historians to redeem the portrait of this eastern conqueress, who founded cities and turned the course of rivers, from those atrocious features, which stamp her in our imaginations as the “incestuous beldame,” “the homicide and husband killer” of the poets.

Another famous Assyrian queen is recorded to have lived two or three centuries after Semiramis; her name was Nitocris; she dug a new channel for the river Euphrates, by which the navigation of the river was greatly improved; she also distinguished herself by her conquests over the neighbouring nations, and left behind her many stupendous edifices. What strikes us as most remarkable in all this is, the extraordinary fact, and the only one on which we can depend, that in those early periods of the world, in countries where the women have for ages been kept either in seclusion or in slavery, and in a dynasty of kings notorious for their extreme effeminacy, two women should have held such powerful sway, and have planned and executed works of such amazing grandeur and utility.

CLEOPATRA,

QUEEN OF EGYPT.

CLEOPATRA presents herself to our fancy in fine contrast with Semiramis. While the majesty of Assyria, “in sceptered pall comes sweeping by,” a mighty but vague impersonation of power, guilt, and grandeur, Cleopatra stands before us a vivid reality, combining with her historical and classical celebrity all the interest that poetry, romance, and the arts could throw around her. As a woman, she can scarcely be said to claim either our sympathy or our respect; as a sovereign, she neither achieved great exploits nor great conquests, nor left behind her any magnificent or enduring monuments of her power—but she has left behind her a *name*, which still acts as a spell upon the fancy. There have been five or six Cleopatras conspicuous in the dynasties of Egypt and Syria, either for their crimes or their misfor-

tunes ; but Fame seems to acknowledge but one, and with her celebrity has filled the world.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, was the second daughter of Ptolemy Auletes, and born in the year of Rome 683, or about sixty-nine years before the Christian era.

On the division of Alexander's empire among his generals, Egypt had fallen to the share of Ptolemy Lagus ; and his posterity, all bearing the name of Ptolemy, continued to govern that country during a period of two hundred and ninety years. This dynasty of sovereigns, which had produced several wise and great princes, had been gradually degenerating, and seemed to have arrived at the lowest depth of degradation in the person of Ptolemy Auletes, of whom it is recorded, that his highest accomplishment consisted in playing wonderfully well upon the flute. His avarice, folly, and misgovernment, rendered him at length so hateful and contemptible to his people, that they drove him from the throne, and conferred the supreme power on his eldest daughter Berenice and her husband Archelaus.

Ptolemy immediately threw himself on the protection of the Romans, and Pompey, then at the head of affairs, warmly espoused the cause of the fallen monarch. Through his good offices, and

the intervention of the Roman power, which was then irresistible, Ptolemy was replaced on his throne. On his return to Egypt, his first action was to put to death his daughter Berenice and her husband; but domestic murders had become so common in the family of the Ptolemies, that this event excited neither surprise nor horror. He afterwards reigned tranquilly for four years, and dying, bequeathed his throne to his second daughter Cleopatra, and his eldest son Ptolemy Dionysius, who were to reign jointly as king and queen, under the guardianship of the Roman Senate.

At the time that the sovereignty of Egypt devolved on Cleopatra and her brother, she was about fourteen, and he was three or four years younger. Ptolemy was of a feeble, indolent, and vacillating temper; Cleopatra, on the contrary, had already displayed the most extraordinary talents, which, combined with an aspiring and energetic spirit, rendered her an object of jealousy to the vile courtiers who surrounded her brother. Theodorus his tutor, Achilles his general, and Photinus his chamberlain, divided the administration among them, and succeeded in sowing dissension between the young king and queen, by infusing into the mind of Ptolemy a jealous fear of his sister's superiority. At length Cleo-

patra, either in real or pretended fear of her life from the intrigues of these men, fled from Alexandria, and retired with her adherents into Syria.

Here the number of her friends and followers daily increased; those who were not attached to her cause from conviction, or a sense of justice, were won by those arts of blandishment in which she is said to have excelled even from her childhood; by her persuasive eloquence, and more persuasive gifts. Her accomplishments rendered her an object of admiration, and her extreme youth of sympathy and commiseration. We are not told who were the ministers and advisers of Cleopatra at this period, but her measures were concerted with so much wisdom, and executed with so much energy and promptitude, that in spite of all we are told of her precocious intellect and singular powers, we can scarcely believe them to have emanated entirely from herself. At the time of her retreat to Syria she was not more than sixteen,—an age at which a woman is sometimes a finished coquette “*par instinct*,” but seldom a bold and practised diplomatist.

She despatched in the first place ambassadors to Rome, to justify herself before the Senate, and complain of the conduct of Achilles and Photinus, whom she denounced as traitors to her government, and enemies of the Roman people; and as

at this time Pompey and Cæsar were contending for empire, she sent to Pompey, the benefactor of her family, a reinforcement of fifty galleys, manned and armed. After some time had elapsed without any answer from the Senate, Cleopatra found that the Romans were too much occupied with their own intestine dissensions to attend to the affairs of Egypt; she therefore took her cause into her own hands, and levied an army, at the head of which she boldly marched into Egypt to claim her rights. Ptolemy, or rather his ministers (for he was then only thirteen), raised an army to oppose her, and stationed himself at Pelusium, a celebrated fortress at the entrance of the Nile. At this juncture occurred the battle of Pharsalia, which rendered Cæsar the sole and undisputed master of the vast resources of the Roman empire. Pompey, pursued, or rather conducted by his evil destinies, fled from the plains of Thessaly, and sought a refuge in Egypt; trusting—vainly trusting—that the favours he had formerly heaped on the family of Ptolemy would give him the strongest claim to the hospitality and protection of the Egyptians.

But the news of the battle had arrived before him, and with it the intelligence that Cæsar was pursuing his fallen adversary to the shores of Egypt. The perfidious ministers of Ptolemy re-

solved to abandon the weaker side and to bespeak the friendship of the conqueror by the sacrifice of his great rival: the well-known catastrophe need hardly be repeated here. Pompey was basely assassinated at the moment of his landing, and his head and signet-ring were presented to Cæsar as the most acceptable gifts which could be offered to him, and the most expressive homage to his power. Cæsar would probably have taken signal vengeance on the murderers, if the small number of his troops had not obliged him, from prudential motives, to restrain his indignation; he contented himself, therefore, by merely issuing his commands, in the name of the Roman people, that Cleopatra and her brother should appear before him, and submit their differences to his arbitration.

Cleopatra was at this time between sixteen and seventeen, she was not, by all accounts, so beautiful in person, as she was graceful and captivating in manner: but the melody of her voice, the brightness of her smiles, the various accomplishments of her mind, and a peculiar art of adapting herself to the individual tastes and habits of those she addressed, formed that combination of charms by which she subdued all who approached her. She was fond of learning, and a patroness of learned men; had studied with success the Greek philosophy and

literature, and spoke ten different languages with equal fluency. But she had been educated in a most corrupt court, and imbibed its vices: from her childhood she had been immersed in vile intrigues, and in continual struggles for power. She was dissembling, ambitious, vain, perverse, and utterly unprincipled; presenting a strange mixture of talent and frivolity, of firmness and caprice, of magnanimity and artifice, of royal pride and more than feminine weakness.

She had made herself well acquainted with the character of Cæsar, and she resolved not to trust only to the justice of her cause, but if possible to interest him personally in her favour before he should be called on to give judgment in her affairs. Cæsar was so surrounded by the minions of Ptolemy, that it was difficult to enter the palace, or to procure access to him in private. But to compass her object, no instrument was too mean, no expedient too degrading, no sacrifice too great, though it should include that of her sex's honour, as well as of her queenly dignity. She procured the assistance of a chamberlain named Apollodorus, and he conveyed her on his back, concealed in a mattress or a bundle of linen, to the very apartment of Cæsar. If the Roman general was surprised by this unexpected introduction, he was not less struck by the bold-

ness and dexterity with which she had obtained access to him. But when Cleopatra threw herself, all bathed in tears, at his feet, he was no longer able to resist her. In a speech of the most artful and persuasive eloquence, she expatiated on the injustice of her enemies; she recapitulated the injuries and indignities she had endured from the minions of her brother; she defended herself on the plea of policy and gratitude for the assistance she had sent to Pompey, the friend of her family; and concluded by appealing, as a defenceless woman and an injured queen, to the generosity and compassion of the Roman general. The appeal was not made in vain. Cæsar was captivated by her charms and her eloquence; he not only promised his favour and protection, but he proffered love, and laid himself and his power at her feet. A few days after this first interview, he commanded that the brother and sister should disband their respective armies, and submit entirely to his judgment. Cleopatra was well content to leave her destinies in the hands of a man who was so completely subdued to her power as to have no will but her's. But the adherents of Ptolemy were not so inclined. They exclaimed against the insolence of a man who attempted to dictate laws to them in their own

capital, as if he had been their conqueror rather than their friend and ally. They could easily guess at the means by which Cleopatra had seduced her judge; and Ptolemy, filling the city with his just complaints, excited the people of Alexandria to attack Cæsar in the palace. Many engagements took place, in which both Cleopatra and Cæsar were exposed to the most imminent dangers. The young queen showed herself worthy of the confidence and affection of Cæsar during this terrible emergency, and by her advice, her presence of mind, and her knowledge of the people and the country, rendered him the most essential services.

The insurrection was at length quelled, after many vicissitudes of fortune and much bloodshed. The famous Alexandrian library being accidentally set on fire in one of these encounters, forty thousand volumes were consumed before the conflagration was extinguished.

Two of Cleopatra's most deadly enemies had perished during this short war; Photinus had been put to death by Cæsar, not without just provocation; and Achilles had been murdered by the orders of Arsinoë, the younger sister of Cleopatra, who had joined the rebels against her. Ptolemy, who had given early proofs both of

wickedness and weakness, was afterwards accidentally drowned by the sinking of a galley, and all Egypt submitted to the conqueror.

Tranquillity being thus restored, Cæsar undertook a progress through Egypt, in company with Cleopatra. They ascended the Nile together in the same vessel, followed by a splendid retinue; and it is said that Cæsar would have proceeded with her beyond the Cataracts, into Ethiopia, if his veteran troops had not refused to follow him: they blushed to behold their general, who had so often led them to victory, abandoned to luxury and indolence, and completely in the power of an artful and ambitious woman. They returned, therefore, to Alexandria, and soon afterwards Cæsar was called by the state of affairs into Armenia and Cappadocia. Previous to his departure, he caused Cleopatra and her only surviving brother, the younger Ptolemy, then about eleven years old, to be proclaimed king and queen of Egypt. His son by Cleopatra, to whom the Alexandrians had given the name of Cæsarion, he declared heir to the Egyptian crown, and then taking leave of his enchanting queen with regret, he conducted his legions against Pharnaces, king of Pontus.

Young Ptolemy died a short time afterwards, and it is supposed by some authors that Cleopatra poi-

soned him either to reign alone, or to ensure the undisputed succession to her son Cæsarion. If we may judge from her character, and the frequency of such crimes in her family, she was not incapable of the atrocity imputed to her, if it would have answered any purpose. But it is fair to remark, that the accusation does not rest on historic proof; and to cause the death of an unoffending and helpless child, without some more adequate motive, bespeaks a heart more completely hardened against the natural affections, than Cleopatra ever exhibited.

During a period of twelve years, that is, from the departure of Cæsar to the rupture between Octavius and Mark Antony, Cleopatra continued to rule her kingdom in great splendour and prosperity. Either through a natural taste for magnificence, or a belief that the vulgar are imposed on, and governed by means of outward show, she never appeared in public but with the most dazzling pomp; she even assumed the habiliments and head-dress of the goddess Isis, the principal divinity of the Egyptians, and she was thus represented in her coins and statues. Very little is recorded of the life and actions of Cleopatra during this time; but it appears incidentally that she governed in such a manner as to secure the affection and reverence of her peo-

ple, and the respect of the neighbouring nations, some of whom submitted voluntarily to her power, and others chose her as the arbitress of their mutual differences. She did not attempt to extend her dominion by force of arms, but rather by policy and prudence. A disposition to violence, or even personal courage, formed no part of the character of Cleopatra, and her ambition, though unbounded, was never warlike. She was luxurious and magnificent, but not indolent; she transacted all affairs, gave audience to ambassadors, and administered justice in person. She made a journey to Rome in the year 46 B. C. to congratulate Cæsar on his Asiatic triumphs; and on this occasion she displayed all that profuse magnificence for which she was remarkable: she presented to Cæsar and to the Roman people gifts of extraordinary value, rare pictures, sculpture, gems, gold, and tapestries, which were deposited in the Capitol; and Cæsar returned the compliment by placing her statue in massive gold on the right hand of Venus, in the temple of that goddess.

Within two years after this memorable visit, Cæsar was assassinated in the Capitol. We are not told how Cleopatra received the intelligence of his fate, or whether she was deeply affected by the violent death of one who had been her friend, protector, and lover; but it appears that about this

time Sextus Pompey visited her in Egypt, where he was entertained with magnificence; and that she attached him to her interests by the same means which she had found so successful with others. Young Pompey was at this period master of the whole Mediterranean; his victorious and innumerable galleys swept the seas, and at a crisis when the death of Cæsar left her without a protector at Rome, Cleopatra felt all the advantage of securing such a partisan, and, as usual, was not scrupulous about the means she employed for that purpose. It was her connexion with Pompey, which exposed her to the accusation of having aided the conspirators with money and arms after the death of Cæsar. This accusation, whether true or false—and one would wish for the honour of female nature to believe it false—led to the celebrated attachment between Mark Antony and Cleopatra, which ended in the destruction of both, and has rendered their names for ever inseparable in the memory of man.

The occasion of their first meeting was this:—After the battle of Philippi, in which Brutus and Cassius were defeated, Antony had taken the command of the army against the Parthians, and on leaving Greece to pass into Asia, he sent orders to Cleopatra to meet him in Cilicia, and justify herself against the accusation of having

assisted Brutus and Cassius in their war against the Triumvirate. The queen prepared to obey this haughty summons, but she trusted more to her address and her personal charms than to the justice of her cause : and being perfectly acquainted with the character of the man to whom she was about to introduce herself, did not despair of subduing Antony by the same arts which had already vanquished Cæsar. Attended by a numerous and splendid retinue, and loaded with a world of treasures and gifts, and store of gold and silver, she proceeded through Syria to meet Antony in Asia Minor ; and though she was frequently informed that he waited her arrival with impatience, she did not condescend to hasten her progress ; but mocking at his letters and messengers with a smiling grace, travelled with pomp and leisure, as one who was about to confer an honour on an inferior, rather than to obey the summons of a superior. On her arrival in Cilicia, she embarked on the river Cydnus to sail down to Tarsus ; and this triumphant and magnificent voyage has become, from the descriptions of Shakspeare and Dryden, famous in poetry as well as in history,—although poetry itself could scarcely enhance the gorgeousness of the picture. The poop of the galley was of gold, the sails of

purple silk, and the silver oars* kept time to the sound of various musical instruments, which breathed the most delicious harmony. The Queen of Egypt lay reclined on a couch, under a canopy of cloth of gold, crowned and attired like the goddess Venus, while beautiful boys winged to represent Cupids, stood fanning her on either side: the fairest among her maids, some habited like the Nereids, and others like the Graces, were employed in the steerage and management of the vessel; altars were raised and incense was burned along the shores, which were covered with multitudes of people, who crowded to gaze on the splendid pageant, and filled the air with acclamations.

Presently a rumour was spread abroad that Venus was come to feast with Bacchus, and the whole populace of the city of Tarsus poured forth to meet and receive her. Antony invited her to supper, but she sent him word that he should rather wait upon her; that she was too fatigued

* I remember to have read somewhere, though I cannot refer to the authority, that the silver oars of Cleopatra's barge were pierced at the extremities with holes of different sizes, and so mechanically contrived, that the water, as it flowed through them at every stroke, produced a harmony in concord with that of the flutes and lyres on board.

to land, and would have the pleasure of receiving and entertaining him on board her galley; in short, she assumed from the first the airs not only of a queen, but of a divinity. How well she understood the temper of the man she sought to captivate by all this gorgeous display of oriental pomp and grandeur, is shown by her success. Antony, like Cæsar, had begun by being her judge and the arbitrator of her fate, and he ended by becoming the veriest slave that ever was chained to a woman's footstool. At the time of his first meeting with Cleopatra, the Triumvir was past the meridian of life. He was in his forty-eighth year, "of a noble presence, a graceful length of beard, an ample forehead, and an aquiline nose;" he was thought to resemble in his person the pictures and statues of Hercules, and was in fact vain of his supposed descent from that hero. In his character he was fearlessly brave, open-hearted, and magnificent, but arrogant, vindictive, and abandoned to every species of dissolute excess. He appeared by turns, as the humour seized him, generous and compassionate, or base, selfish, and relentless; could devote his life and fortune to the service of a friend, or insult over the remains of a murdered enemy: and that enemy—Cicero! On the whole, he appears to have been without one touch of true magnanimity,

though sometimes irregularly great from accident or impulse ; a magnificent, reckless libertine : a valiant but a coarse soldier. Cleopatra, laying aside her literary pursuits, her refined elegance, and the many-coloured robe and majestic deportment of the goddess Isis, lent herself to all his rough tastes ; drank, and revelled, and jested with him ; hunted half the day, banqueted half the night, and surpassed him in prodigality and magnificence. Antony put off for her sake his Parthian expedition, and she led him in triumph to Alexandria.

Many anecdotes are told of the riotous and extravagant life which they led for several months in the capital of Egypt, vying with each other in dissipation and revelry ; while treasures, wrung from the blood and tears of thousands of human beings were lavished at a single feast. The famous story of Cleopatra's pearl is so often alluded to in history and poetry, besides being a favourite subject of painters and sculptors, that it ought to be mentioned here. It is said that Antony having once boasted of the splendour of an entertainment he had given to the queen, she laid him a wager that she would serve up to him a banquet of such exceeding magnificence, that one single course should be of more cost than all his feasts put together. Lucius Plancus was chosen as

umpire. Cleopatra was accustomed to wear in her ears two pearls, unequalled in the world for their size, beauty, and value, the least of which was valued at 50,000*l.* of English money. When she was seated at the table with Antony, she took one of these pearls from her ear, and dissolving it in a cup of vinegar, pledged Antony and drank it off. She was about to treat the remaining pearl in the same manner, when Antony, in amazement, stopped her hand, and Lucius Plancus declared that she had already won the wager. Such is the story handed down to us from antiquity. That a woman like Cleopatra should sacrifice 50,000*l.* or a million, for a whim, is not absolutely incredible; but an acid of sufficient strength to melt a pearl instantaneously could not be swallowed with impunity. Cleopatra, if she *did* dissolve her pearl, must have diluted her cup with two or three bowls of wine. The other pearl, which had been the companion of that which Cleopatra had sacrificed with a kind of sublime ostentation, was afterwards carried to Rome, where it was divided into two, each almost inestimable, and hung in the ears of a celebrated statue of Venus, which Agrippa had just placed in his Pantheon.

The life which Mark Antony led with Cleopatra, displeased Octavius and the Roman people. They called upon him to return, and at length the

Triumvir, rousing himself as from a lethargy, set out for Italy; there a reconciliation was effected between the rival generals, and one of the conditions was the marriage of Antony with Octavia, the half sister of Octavius, and a woman of equal beauty and virtue. Cleopatra heard of this union with grief and despair; she feared that it would put an end to her power over Antony, a power which rendered her in fact mistress of half the Roman empire; and it is certain that the idea of reigning at Rome, and dictating laws from the Capitol, had taken strong possession of her ambitious mind and vivid imagination. She had a powerful rival in Octavia, whose character is one of the most beautiful recorded in history, uniting all the dignity of a Roman matron in the best days of the republic, with all the gentleness and graces of her sex. Though the marriage had been one of policy, she became strongly attached to her husband, and Antony, who was generous as well as facile, could not refuse her his esteem and his love. Octavia became the mediating angel between her fiery husband and her subtle brother, and for four years Antony remained faithful to this admirable woman, and appeared to have forgotten his Egyptian syren. He was, however, the slave of circumstance and impulse, and in passing through Asia Minor, to resume the Parthian war,

his old love for Cleopatra seemed to revive as he approached the scenes of their former intercourse, and he had the weakness to send Fonteius Capito, to invite her to come to him.

One might have imagined that the dignity of an offended woman, if not the pride of a great queen, would have prevented Cleopatra from obeying this invitation, or rather this command; but neither the one nor the other was ever known to stand in the way of her passions or her policy. She did not hesitate to attend him; and this time she travelled with rather more expedition than on a former occasion. On her arrival, Antony presented her with gifts; not rings, nor jewels, nor slaves, nor chariots, nor rich robes, but whole kingdoms and provinces, and millions of subjects. He gave her Phœnicia, Cœlo-Syria, the island of Cyprus, Cilicia, part of Judea, and part of Arabia. As all the Asiatic provinces, from the Ionian Sea eastward, had been given up to Antony as his share of the empire, he might perhaps suppose that in bestowing these dominions on Cleopatra he was only presenting her with what, in the insolence of power, he deemed his own; and, it may be added, that several of these provinces formed part of the ancient empire of the Ptolemies.

The Parthian war (B. C. 36.) ended disgracefully; Antony, after many disasters, was forced

to retreat, and had nearly suffered the fate of Crassus. He brought the miserable remains of his army back to Syria, and Cleopatra met him on the coast of Judea, carrying with her money and clothing for his exhausted troops. Octavia also set out from Rome to meet Antony, taking with her reinforcements in men and money to assist him ; but when she had reached Athens, Antony, acting under the spell of the sorceress who had subdued his better nature, commanded her to return to Italy. Cleopatra dreaded the power of Octavia ; she felt, or she affected, the deepest affliction at the idea of his leaving her, and her “ flickering enticements,” to borrow the expression of the old translator of Plutarch, are well described, and give us a complete idea of the woman. She pretended to be the victim of a concealed grief ; wasted her frame by voluntary abstinence, and “ caused herself to be surprised” in tears, which she wiped away in haste, as if unwilling that they should be seen. Meantime those who were devoted to her interest were incessantly representing her sufferings to Antony, and, appealing to his pity in behalf of a woman who loved him more than life or fame ; who had sacrificed the one, and was ready to sacrifice the other for his sake. Such artifices subdued Antony, as they have wrought on better and wiser men ; and in the

height of his infatuation he sent peremptory orders to Octavia to quit his house at Rome. The lavish gifts bestowed on Cleopatra without the sanction of the Roman state; the dereliction of all his duties as a general and citizen; and now the indignities heaped on his excellent wife, the noblest lady in character and station in the empire, exasperated the Romans, and lent the fairest excuse to Octavius Cæsar for the breach he had long meditated. Octavia, the ever generous, ever admirable Octavia, entreated her brother not to make her wrongs the excuse for a war which would plunge the whole empire into confusion; and when her prayers availed not, she shut herself up in her house, devoted herself to her children, and refused to take any share in the deplorable contest she had no power to avert. It soon became apparent that a civil war between Octavius and Antony was inevitable. They assembled their forces by sea and land, and Cleopatra brought to the assistance of Antony two hundred galleys, twenty thousand talents, and provisions for his whole army. While these warlike preparations were going forward, they spent some time in the island of Samos, revelling in every species of luxury, and afterwards sailed for Athens, where the people decreed to Cleopatra public honours.

Antony and his friends had requested of the

queen that she would return to Egypt, and there wait the event of the war ; but this she positively refused, representing that as she was one of Antony's principal allies, it was unreasonable to deny her the privilege of being present, and commanding her own vessels and troops. It is probable that she dreaded a reconciliation between the rivals, and would rather have hazarded all on the issue of a battle, than have run the risk of losing her power over Antony. It was in compliance with her wishes that he resolved to engage Octavius by sea, contrary to the advice of his most experienced generals. " Her motive," says Plutarch, " was not the superior chance of victory, but in case of being vanquished, the better opportunity to escape." That such an idea should have suggested itself to the mind of a woman constitutionally timid even beyond the timidity of her sex, is not surprising ; but that a veteran soldier like Antony should have yielded his opinion and conviction to her upon such an occasion, is indeed wonderful. It was a saying among the ancients, that " those whom the gods wished to destroy, they first deprived of understanding ;" and the infatuated folly of Antony devoted himself and thousands of brave men to destruction.

The sea-fight of Actium took place, therefore, under the most unfavourable auspices. Cleopatra

insisted on being present at the engagement, but in the very outset of the battle, while all remained as yet undecided, she was seized with a sudden panic, and her sixty galleys were beheld, with all their sails spread, flying from the combat. This dereliction, which was the effect of fear rather than treachery, might have involved only Cleopatra and her followers in assured destruction, but for the madness of Antony, who, leaving his brave friends, his army and his navy to their fate, sprang into a five-oared galley, and followed the Queen of Egypt in her ignominious flight. She saw him approaching, put up a signal in her vessel, and took him on board, but both were so overcome with shame and despair, that they could not look upon each other. Antony sat down and covered his face with his hands, and Cleopatra, retiring to the opposite extremity of the vessel, wept, while she gazed upon him, and had not courage to address him. At the end of three days their attendants succeeded in reconciling them, and they sailed for Libya.

Antony remained himself for some time in Libya, abandoned to despair, but he sent forward Cleopatra, under a safe convoy, to Alexandria.

It has already been observed that Cleopatra had no martial spirit, no disposition to meet violence with violence; on the contrary, she was, as a

woman, “born to fears;” but the physical cowardice which caused her terrors and her flight at Actium, was accompanied by great mental activity and energy. On her arrival in her own capital she reflected on the situation to which she was reduced, and she saw that only two alternatives remained, either a war which she was incapable of conducting, or the loss of freedom and empire, to which she was determined not to submit. She formed an extraordinary and a bold resolution, tinctured indeed with the egotism which belonged to her character, but such as would never have occurred to a common mind. She resolved to transport her galleys, with all her choicest treasures, across the narrowest part of the Isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea, to embark there with her most faithful followers, and, like another Dido, sail in quest of some distant and hospitable clime, where she might found a new empire, and dwell in freedom and in peace. This singular enterprise she would probably have carried into execution, but it happened that the first vessels, which with infinite difficulty had been drawn across the isthmus, were burned by the Arabs, and at the same time that she received this information, Antony arrived in Egypt, and she abandoned all thoughts of her expedition. They recommenced their former mode of life, and while destruction was gra-

dually closing upon them on every side like a net, they spent their time in feasting, and in the most magnificent and luxurious amusements. They instituted a society of twelve or fourteen intimate friends, the companions of their revels, and called themselves the "Inimitable band," a title which, as fortune darkened round them, they exchanged for another, signifying the "*United in Death*."

Meantime Octavius was approaching with his army, and their adherents were daily deserting or betraying them; in this emergency Cleopatra sent an ambassador to Octavius, requesting his protection for her children, and that Egypt, as their inheritance, might be preserved to them. She did not ask any thing for herself, for it appears that even at this time she had resolved not to survive her power and her freedom. Antony, so low had he fallen, asked his life, and permission to retire to Athens. Octavius refused to listen to the petition of Antony; but he sent his freedman Thyrsus to Cleopatra, promising her every possible favour if she would either put Antony to death, or banish him from her dominions. We are not told whether Cleopatra spurned this messenger from her presence, nor what answer she returned to Octavius: it is merely said that Thyrsus behaved with an insolence which provoked

Antony, and by his order the man was scourged, and dismissed with disgrace and contempt.


There is not, however, the slightest reason to suspect that Cleopatra listened to the base suggestions of Octavius, or entertained for a moment the idea of betraying Antony; on the contrary, she treated him in his misfortunes with increased tenderness and respect. It is related, that at this time she kept her own birth-day as a day of mourning, "with double pomp of sadness," while the birth-day of Antony, which occurred soon after, was celebrated with such magnificence, "that many of the guests who came poor returned wealthy."

The winter passed away in this manner; in the spring Octavius again took the field and marched upon Alexandria, subduing all the cities and towns which lay in his route.

Cleopatra had erected near the Temple of Isis a magnificent building, which in history is called her *monument*, and which was probably designed as a sepulchre for her family, but like many of the ancient tombs, it was constructed on the scale and with the solidity of a fortress. Thither she conveyed all her treasures, her gold and silver, her jewels, her pearls, her ebony, ivory, and cinnamon. It is curious to find cinnamon enumerated among the most valuable of her possessions,

but in ancient times, when the countries which produced it were yet unknown, this spice was considered almost equivalent to gold: with these she mingled a quantity of flax and a number of torches. Octavius, under the greatest apprehension lest in a fit of despair or wilfulness she should destroy these vast treasures, which he intended to appropriate to himself, sent to her message after message, assuring her of the gentlest treatment, all which the queen received and answered with a complacency more affected than real; her subsequent behaviour showed that she had never trusted Octavius, and his conduct and character equally proved that she had no reason to do so.

Meantime the adverse army appeared before the walls of Alexandria, and Antony, like a lion in the toils, seemed resolved to sell his life as dearly as he could; he made a desperate sally, in which he had the advantage, and drove back the enemy to their intrenchments. Cleopatra met him on his return to the palace; she threw herself into his arms, covered as he was with dust and blood, and when he presented to her a certain soldier who had fought with distinguished bravery by his side, the queen called for a helmet and target of pure gold from the royal treasures, and bestowed them on the warrior, adding “ words of such sweet breath composed as made the gifts more rich”



Loaded with these treasures, the soldier deserted the same night, and went over to the enemy; an instance of ingratitude which some of the friends of Antony regarded with superstitious horror, as ominous of his approaching fall. Another engagement took place a few days afterwards with a far different result. All that remained of Antony's fleet and army surrendered to Octavius almost before a blow was struck; and Antony returned to the city, exclaiming in a fury that he had been betrayed by Cleopatra, and execrating her as the cause of his misfortunes.

The unhappy queen, terrified by this explosion of passion, fled to her monument, accompanied by her two favourite women, Charmian and Iras, and having secured it strongly within, sent a slave to tell Antony that she was dead; but immediately afterwards, repenting of this message, and fearful of the effect it might produce on him, she despatched her secretary Diomed to inform him that she still lived, and desired to see him once more. This assurance arrived too late. Diomed found the worst anticipations of his royal mistress fatally fulfilled: Antony lay stretched on the ground, and weltering in his blood. He had given himself a mortal wound, but he was not yet dead; and in a faint voice he desired to be carried to Cleopatra. With her characteristic timidity and self-



ishness, she could refuse, even at such a moment, to open the gates, from the apprehension of treason, and he was drawn up by cords into the monument; the queen herself assisted her women, distorting every feature by the violence of her efforts; while Antony, already in the agonies of death, extended his arms towards her from below. When they had succeeded in lifting him into the interior of the monument, he was laid on a couch, and Cleopatra, hanging over him, beat her bosom, rent her garments, called on him by a thousand tender names, and gave way to all the violence of feminine grief. Antony endeavoured to soothe her, and while she wiped from his brow the blood, and the damps of approaching death, he called for wine, and drank to her. Soon afterwards he expired in her arms, congratulating himself that, “being a Roman, he had been by a Roman overcome.”

Antony was scarcely dead, when Proculeius arrived from Octavius, with orders to take Cleopatra alive, but she refused to yield, or to admit the messenger into her presence, and would only confer with him from the window. Proculeius assured her of the favour of Octavius, and she replied by again demanding Egypt for her children; she asked nothing for herself but permission to bury Antony.

Octavius, struck by this unexpected reserve, now began to suspect her design, and as her death would have disconcerted all his hopes of exhibiting her in triumph at Rome, to take her alive became an object of almost feverish anxiety. He succeeded by the following stratagem : he sent Gallus to confer with her at the gate of the monument ; meanwhile Proculeius placed a ladder at the window, and while the queen was in deep conversation with Gallus, he entered from behind. Thus taken by surprise, she turned, and instantly drew her dagger, with intent to plunge it in her bosom, but Proculeius snatched it from her, and while she struggled in his arms, endeavoured to soothe her by the most persuasive arguments. He carefully examined her dress, lest she should have poison or weapons concealed about her, and then hurried with the news of his success to Octavius, who received it with exultation.

The means of self-destruction being carefully withheld, and guards posted day and night round the monument, Cleopatra apparently resigned herself to a fate which it was in vain to resist. Having obtained by her prayers the body of Antony, she performed the funeral rites herself with as much pomp and magnificence as she could have displayed in the days of her power. Soon after she was seized with a violent indisposition,

and not only refused to take the remedies prescribed, but with a sullen resolution obstinately rejected food. Octavius became alarmed, and he had recourse to a cruel expedient to force her to attend to her health: all the children of Cleopatra were in his power, and he threatened to treat them with the utmost severity unless she submitted to the treatment of her physicians. Maternal tenderness was one of the few virtues of this woman, and the unfeeling menace of Octavius had its full effect: she consented to take medicine and food, and recovered.

Octavius soon after paid her a visit in her monument, and she received her conqueror with all that politeness, that artificial grace, for which she was so remarkable. Her appearance was deplorable, for her eyes were swelled with incessant weeping, and her bosom disfigured by the blows which she had inflicted on herself, according to the Egyptian custom, when she had performed the obsequies of Antony. Still she preserved her presence of mind, and her object was evidently to blind and disarm Octavius by her apparent submission, rather than impose on him by assuming any airs of dignity. She wept feigned tears, and threw herself on the protection of Octavius, as though she had *not* resolved to die. She gave up an inventory of her treasures; and when her treasurer

Seleucus accused her of keeping back some articles of value, she gave a strong proof of the natural violence and wilfulness of her temper ; she tarted up with sudden passion, caught him by the hair, and struck him several blows on the face. She assured Octavius that the jewels she had withheld were not for herself, but intended as presents to Octavia and Livia, (the sister and wife of Octavius,) by whose good offices she hoped to win his favour. Octavius in return spared neither protestations nor compliments, and after a conference of some length, the conqueror departed with the persuasion that her spirit was broken, and that she was completely subdued to his wishes—but he was totally mistaken. Cleopatra, with as much subtlety, had far more penetration than the Roman ; she had seen through his mean designs and his deep disguises, and while he was exulting in the hope of having deceived her, she triumphed in the certainty of having cheated him. Her resolve was fixed,—to die, rather than be led in triumph through the streets of Rome, a spectacle for the ferocious multitude ; but timid by nature, she dreaded what she most wished, and feared the means of death, more than death itself. For several months, and even long before the death of Antony, she had occupied herself in experiments on the nature and operation

of different poisons, and she found that the bite of the asp, a small venomous serpent, was the least painful and the most rapid in its effects. She had prevailed on a young Roman named Dolabella, to give her timely notice of the intentions of Octavius with respect to her future destination; and he sent her word privately, that in three days she would be despatched into Italy, with her children, to grace the triumph of the conqueror.

On receiving this intelligence, Cleopatra sent a message to Octavius, requesting that she might be permitted to visit the tomb of Antony, and offer such oblations to the dead as were the custom of her nation. This being granted her, she was carried (still surrounded by a numerous guard) to the monument of her lover, and there, falling prostrate before it, and, shedding floods of tears, she burst into the following lamentation:—"It is not long, my Antony, since with these hands I buried thee. Alas! they were then free; but thy Cleopatra is now a prisoner, attended by a guard, lest, in the transports of her grief, she should disfigure this captive body, which is reserved to adorn the triumph over thee. These are the last offerings, the last honours she can pay thee; for she is now to be conveyed to a distant country. Nothing could part us while we lived, but in

death we are to be divided. Thou, though a Roman, liest buried in Egypt; and I, an Egyptian, must be interred in Italy,—the only favour I shall receive from thy country. Yet, if the Gods of Rome have power or mercy left, (for surely those of Egypt have forsaken us,) let them not suffer me to be led in living triumph to thy disgrace! No!—hide me, hide me with thee in the grave; for life, since thou hast left it, has been misery to me.” Having uttered these words, she again embraced the tomb, and assisted by her women, she hung it with wreaths of flowers, and poured over it the funeral libations. These ceremonies duly performed, she returned with an air of composure to her monument, ordered her women Charmian and Iras to prepare a bath, to array her in her royal robes, and place the diadem of Egypt on her head. She then sat down and wrote a letter to Octavius, and having despatched this epistle by a confidential servant, she commanded a sumptuous banquet to be prepared, of which she partook cheerfully. Meantime her letter had been delivered to Octavius, and when he opened it, the plaintive and despairing style in which it was expressed, at once betrayed her fatal intentions. He immediately despatched Proculeius and others with orders to save her if possible: but though they made the utmost speed,

they arrived too late. On breaking open the doors of the monument, a spectacle at once terrible and affecting presented itself; Cleopatra, magnificently arrayed, lay dead on her couch; Iras, one of her women, was extended at her feet; the other still alive, was arranging the diadem on the head of her mistress. Proculeius exclaimed, "Was this well done, Charmian?" to which she replied, "Yes, Roman! it was well done; for such a death became so great a queen:" and on uttering these words, she fell and expired on the body of her mistress.

Thus perished this celebrated woman, whose character exhibits such an extraordinary mixture of grandeur and littleness, and whose life and fate present something so wildly magnificent to the fancy, that we dare not try her by the usual rules of conduct, nor use her name to point a commonplace moral, but must needs leave her as we find her, a dazzling piece of witchcraft, with which sober reasoning has nothing to do. She died in her 39th year, having reigned twenty-two years from the death of her brother Ptolemy. She was twenty-three years younger than Antony, to whom her attachment had lasted fourteen years; and though policy and ambition might have mingled with her love for him, there is no reason to

suppose her guilty of treachery or infidelity to him during this period.

Although Octavius was beyond measure incensed and disappointed by her death, he could not refuse to pay her funeral honours ; but with characteristic meanness, he commanded all the statues which existed of her to be demolished—a usual method among the Romans of expressing hatred and vengeance. A man named Archidius, whom Cleopatra had treated with kindness, offered a thousand talents to redeem them from destruction ; and Octavius, in whom the spirit of avarice was even stronger than the spirit of vengeance, suffered them at this price to stand.

The children of Cleopatra were carried to Rome. Cæsarion, her son by Cæsar, was afterwards put to death by Octavius. Her three children by Antony, were Alexander, Cleopatra, and Ptolemy : they were still in their childhood when they adorned the triumph of Octavius, and walked in procession as captives, while the statue of their mother, exhibiting her as she appeared in death, with a golden asp upon her arm, was paraded before them. The generous Octavia afterwards took them under her care, and brought them up in her own house, making no distinction between them and her own children. She after-

wards married Cleopatra to Juba, king of Mauritania, and the two brothers settled with their sister in that country. The younger Cleopatra inherited much of her mother's grace and accomplishments. Some medals remain with the head of Juba on one side with a Latin inscription, and the head of Cleopatra on the reverse, bearing a Greek inscription; a proof, that though transplanted into a foreign land, she still remembered her native country, and loved and cultivated her native language and literature.

ZENOBIA,
QUEEN OF PALMYRA.

OF the government and manners of the Arabians before the time of Mahomet, we have few and imperfect accounts ; but from the remotest ages, they led the same unsettled and predatory life which they do at this day, dispersed in hordes, and dwelling under tents. It was not to those wild and wandering tribes, that the superb Palmyra owed its rise and grandeur, though situated in the midst of their deserts, where it is now beheld in its melancholy beauty and ruined splendour, like an enchanted island in the midst of an ocean of sands. The merchants who trafficked between India and Europe, by the only route then known, first colonised this singular spot, which afforded them a convenient resting-place, and even in the days of Solomon it was the emporium for the gems and gold, the ivory, gums,

spices, and silks of the far Eastern countries, which thus found their way to the remotest parts of Europe. The Palmyrenes were, therefore, a mixed race,—their origin, and many of their customs were Egyptian; their love of luxury, and their manners, were derived from Persia; their language, literature, and architecture, were Greek.

Thus, like Venice and Genoa, in more modern times, Palmyra owed its splendour to the opulence and public spirit of its merchants; but its chief fame and historical interest it owes to the genius and heroism of a woman.

Septimia Zenobia, for such is her classical appellation, was the daughter of an Arab chief, Amrou, the son of Dharb, the son of Hassan. Of her first husband we have no account: she was left a widow at a very early age, and married, secondly, Odenathus, chief of several tribes of the Desert, near Palmyra, and a Prince of extraordinary valour, and boundless ambition. Odenathus was the ally of the Romans in their wars against Sapor, (or more properly, Shah Poor,) king of Persia: he gained several splendid victories over that powerful monarch, and twice pursued his armies even to the gates of Ctesiphon, (or Ispahan,) his capital. Odenathus was as fond of the chase as of war, and in all his military and hunting expeditions he was accompanied by his wife

Zenobia, a circumstance which the Roman historians record with astonishment and admiration, as contrary to their manners, but which was the general custom of the Arab women of that time. Zenobia not only excelled her country-women in the qualities for which they all were remarkable, in courage, prudence, and fortitude, in patience of fatigue, and activity of mind and body ;—she also possessed a more enlarged understanding ; her views were more enlightened, her habits more intellectual. The successes of Odenathus were partly attributed to her, and they were always considered as reigning jointly. She was also eminently beautiful—with the Oriental eyes and complexion, teeth like pearls, and a voice of uncommon power and sweetness.

Odenathus obtained from the Romans the title of Augustus, and General of the East ; he revenged the fate of Valerian, who had been taken captive and put to death by Shah Poor: the Eastern king with a luxurious barbarity truly Oriental, is said to have used the unfortunate emperor as his footstool to mount his horse. But in the midst of his victories and conquests Odenathus became the victim of a domestic conspiracy at the head of which was his nephew Mæonius. He was assassinated at Emessa during a hunting expedition, and with him his son by his first marriage. Zenobia

avenged the death of her husband on his murderers, and as her sons were yet in their infancy, she first exercised the supreme power in their name; but afterwards, apparently with the consent of the people, assumed the diadem with the titles of Augusta and Queen of the East.

The Romans and their effeminate Emperor Gallienus refused to acknowledge Zenobia's claim to the sovereignty of her husband's dominions, and Heraclianus was sent with a large army to reduce her to obedience; but Zenobia took the field against him, engaged and totally defeated him in a pitched battle. Not satisfied with this triumph over the haughty masters of the world, she sent her general Zabdas to attack them in Egypt, which she subdued and added to her territories, together with a part of Armenia and Asia Minor. Thus her dominion extended from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, and over all those vast and fertile countries formerly governed by Ptolemy and Seleucus. Jerusalem, Antioch, Damascus, and other cities famed in history, were included in her empire, but she fixed her residence at Palmyra, and in an interval of peace she turned her attention to the farther adornment of her magnificent capital. It is related by historians, that many of those stupendous fabrics of which the mighty ruins are still existing, were either erected or

at least restored and embellished by this extraordinary woman. But that which we have most difficulty in reconciling with the manners of her age and country, was Zenobia's passion for study, and her taste for the Greek and Latin literature. She is said to have drawn up an epitome of history for her own use ; the Greek historians, poets, and philosophers, were familiar to her ; she invited Longinus, one of the most elegant writers of antiquity, to her splendid court, and appointed him her secretary and minister. For her he composed his famous "Treatise on the Sublime," a work which is not only admirable for its intrinsic excellence, but most valuable as having preserved to our times many beautiful fragments of ancient poets whose works are now lost, particularly those of Sappho.

The classical studies of Zenobia, seem to have inspired her with some contempt for her Arab ancestry. She was fond of deriving her origin from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, and of reckoning Cleopatra among her progenitors. In imitation of the famous Egyptian queen, she affected great splendour in her style of living and in her attire ; and drank her wine out of cups of gold richly carved and adorned with gems. It is, however, admitted that in female dignity and discretion, as well as in beauty, she far surpassed Cleopatra. She admi-

nistered the government of her empire with such admirable prudence and policy, and in particular with such strict justice towards all classes of her subjects, that she was beloved by her own people, and respected and feared by the neighbouring nations. She paid great attention to the education of her three sons, habited them in the Roman purple, and brought them up in the Roman fashion. But this predilection for the Greek and Roman manners appears to have displeased and alienated the Arab tribes, for it is remarked that after this time their fleet cavalry, inured to the deserts and unequalled as horsemen, no longer formed the strength of her army.

While Gallienus and Claudius governed the Roman empire, Zenobia was allowed to pursue her conquests, rule her dominions, and enjoy her triumphs almost without opposition; but at length the fierce and active Aurelian was raised to the purple, and he was indignant that a woman should thus brave with impunity the offended majesty of Rome. Having subdued all his competitors in the west, he turned his arms against the Queen of the East. Zenobia, undismayed by the terrors of the Roman name, levied troops, placed herself at their head, and gave the second command to Zabdas, a brave and hitherto successful general. The first great battle took place

ZENOBIA.

near Antioch ; Zenobia was totally defeated after an obstinate conflict ; but not disheartened by this reverse she retired upon Emessa, rallied her armies, and once more defied the Roman emperor. Being again defeated with great loss, and her army nearly dispersed, the high-spirited queen withdrew to Palmyra, collected her friends around her, strengthened the fortifications, and declared her resolution to defend her capital and her freedom to the last moment of her existence.

Zenobia was conscious of the great difficulties which would attend the siege of a great city, well stored with provisions and naturally defended by surrounding deserts ; these deserts were infested by clouds of Arabs, who, appearing and disappearing with the swiftness and suddenness of a whirlwind, continually harassed her enemies. Thus defended without, and supported by a strong garrison within, Zenobia braved her antagonist from the towers of Palmyra as boldly as she had defied him in the field of battle. The expectation of succours from the East, added to her courage and determined her to persevere to the last. “ Those,” said Aurelian in one of his letters, “ who speak with contempt of the war I am waging against a woman, are ignorant both of the character and power of Zenobia. It is impossible to enumerate her warlike preparations of

stones, of arrows, and of every species of missile weapons and military engines."

Aurelian, in fact, became doubtful of the event of the siege, and he offered the queen the most honourable terms of capitulation if she would surrender to his arms; but Zenobia, who was aware that famine raged in the Roman camp, and daily looked for the expected relief, rejected his proposals in a famous Greek epistle, written with equal arrogance and eloquence; she defied the utmost of his power; and, alluding to the fate of Cleopatra, expressed her resolution to die like her rather than yield to the Roman arms. Aurelian was incensed by this haughty letter, even more than by dangers and delays attending the siege: he redoubled his efforts, he cut off the succours she expected, he found means to subsist his troops even in the midst of the desert; every day added to the number and strength of his army, every day increased the difficulties of Zenobia, and the despair of the Palmyrenes. The city would not hold out much longer, and the queen resolved to fly, not to ensure her own safety, but to bring relief to her capital:—such at least is the excuse made for a part of her conduct which certainly requires apology. Mounted on a fleet dromedary, she contrived to elude the vigilance of the besiegers and took the road to the Euphrates, but

she was pursued by a party of the Roman light cavalry, overtaken, and brought as a captive into the presence of Aurelian. He sternly demanded how she had dared to oppose the power of Rome? to which she replied with a mixture of firmness and gentleness, "Because I disdained to acknowledge as my masters, such men as Aureolus and Gallienus. To Aurelian I submit as my conqueror and my sovereign." Aurelian was not displeased at the artful compliment implied in this answer, but he had not forgotten the insulting arrogance of her former reply. While this conference was going forward in the tent of the Roman emperor, the troops, who were enraged by her long and obstinate resistance, and all they had suffered during the siege, assembled in tumultuous bands, calling out for vengeance, and with loud and fierce cries demanding her instant death. The unhappy queen, surrounded by the ferocious and insolent soldiery, forgot all her former vaunts and intrepidity: her feminine terrors had perhaps been excusable if they had not rendered her base; but in her first panic she threw herself on the mercy of the emperor, accused her ministers as the cause of her determined resistance, and confessed that Longinus had written in her name that eloquent letter of defiance which had so incensed the emperor.

stones, along with the rest of her immediate friends and counsellors, were instantly sacrificed to the fury of the soldiers, and the philosopher met death with all the fortitude which became a wise and great man, employing his last moments in endeavouring to console Zenobia and reconcile her to her fate.

Palmyra surrendered to the conqueror, who seized upon the treasures of the city, but spared the buildings and the lives of the inhabitants. Leaving in the place a garrison of Romans, he returned to Europe, carrying with him Zenobia and her family, who were destined to grace his triumph.

But scarcely had Aurelian reached the Hellespont, when tidings were brought to him that the inhabitants of Palmyra had again revolted and had put the Roman governor and garrison to the sword. Without a moment's deliberation, the emperor turned back, reached Palmyra by rapid marches, and took a terrible vengeance on that miserable and devoted city: he commanded the indiscriminate massacre of all the inhabitants, men, women, and children;—fired its magnificent edifices, and levelled its walls to the ground. He afterwards repented of his fury, and devoted a part of the captured treasures to reinstate some of the glories he had destroyed; but it was too late; he

could not reanimate the dead, nor raise ruins the stupendous Temple of the Sun. Palmyra became desolate; its very existence was forgotten, until about a century ago, when some English travellers discovered it by accident. Thus the blind fury of one man extinguished life, happiness, industry, art, and intelligence, through a vast extent of country, and severed a link which had long connected the eastern and western continents of the old world.

When Aurelian returned to Rome after the termination of this war, he celebrated his triumph with extraordinary pomp. A vast number of elephants, and tigers, and strange beasts from the conquered countries; sixteen hundred gladiators, an innumerable train of captives, and a gorgeous display of treasures,—gold, silver, gems, plate, glittering raiment, and oriental luxuries and rarities, the rich plunder of Palmyra, were exhibited to the populace. But every eye was fixed on the beautiful and majestic figure of the Syrian queen, who walked in the procession before her own sumptuous chariot, attired in her diadem and royal robes, blazing with jewels, her eyes fixed on the ground, and her delicate form drooping under the weight of her golden fetters, which were so heavy that two slaves were obliged to assist in supporting them on either side; while

stones, and the populace, at that time the most brutal and degraded in the whole world, gaped and stared upon her misery, and shouted in exultation over her fall. Perhaps Zenobia may in that moment have thought upon Cleopatra, whose example she had once proposed to follow; and, according to the Pagan ideas of greatness and fortitude, envied her destiny, and felt her own ignominy with all the bitterness of a vain repentance.

The captivity of Zenobia took place in the year 273, and in the fifth year of her reign. There are two accounts of her subsequent fate, differing widely from each other. One author asserts that she starved herself to death, refusing to survive her own disgrace and the ruin of her country; but others inform us that the Emperor Aurelian bestowed on her a superb villa at Tivoli, where she resided in great honour; and that she was afterwards united to a Roman senator, with whom she lived many years, and died at a good old age. Her daughters married into Roman families, and it is said that some of her descendants remained so late as the fifth century.

The three sons of Zenobia are called, in the Latin histories, Timolaus, Herennicanus, and Vaballathus. The youngest became king of part of Armenia; but of the two eldest we have no account.

JOANNA I.

QUEEN OF NAPLES.

ROBERT of Taranto, who ascended the throne of Naples in 1309, was one of the most admirable and enlightened monarchs of his age, and the third of the Angevine princes who had reigned over Naples, from the time that Charles of Anjou usurped that crown in 1265. The name and the memory of King Robert have descended to us, linked with the most delightful associations; he is distinguished in Italian history by the epithets of the WISE and the GOOD, and if some of his political arrangements may render his claims to the former epithet a little doubtful, yet in one respect it was justly merited. He lived at the period when literature and civilization were beginning to dawn in Italy; if that can be called a *dawn* which was illuminated by such men as Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, with all of whom he was contemporary. It must, however, be allowed that

the light they shed was at the time only partial, and that the munificent and general protection which Robert extended to letters and learned men, contributed greatly to cherish and diffuse that light. His own acquirements were extraordinary for the times in which he lived, particularly in the sciences, for until his acquaintance with Petrarch, he seems to have despised poetry. However, he became so sincere a convert to the charms of verse, that in his old age he commenced poet himself, and several of his compositions in the Tuscan dialect are yet extant.* It was wisdom in Robert to perceive in what his most just and durable fame would hereafter consist. It was wisdom too in those dark and turbulent times to feel and acknowledge the blessings of peace, and to avert by every possible means, war and its attendant horrors from his hereditary dominions. The name of “*Il buon Rè Roberto*,” the friend of Petrarch and the first patron of Boccaccio, has a far dearer interest in our memory than that of any of the iron-girt, fighting monarchs of his age, if we except his illustrious namesake and contemporary Robert Bruce, whose celebrity, though so different in character, is not brighter or purer than that of Robert of Naples.

* They were printed at Rome, in 1642.

Robert had one son, Charles Duke of Calabria, remarkable for his accomplishments, his filial piety and his love of justice, who unhappily died before his father. This prince had espoused Maria de Valois, sister to that Philippe de Valois, who disputed the crown of France with our Edward the Third ; and by her, who survived him only three years, he left two infant daughters, Joanna and Maria. Joanna, the eldest of these princesses, became afterwards one of the most celebrated, most accomplished and most unfortunate of women and of queens. Her elegant biographer has truly observed,* that in person, in character, in conduct, in her destiny and tragical end, Joanna can only be compared to Mary Queen of Scots: the parallel, as we shall see, is indeed singularly close, and perhaps one of the most remarkable and interesting which is presented in history.

Queen Joanna was born at Naples, about the end of February 1328, and was not quite a year old when she lost her father, the Duke of Calabria. King Robert, whose grief for the death of his excellent son is represented as overwhelming, undertook the care and education of his infant grand-daughters, to whom he transferred all the affection he had felt for their father ; and in

* See the Historical Life of Joanna of Sicily—Preface.

1331, when Joanna was about four years old, he declared her the heiress of his crown, and caused his nobles to take the oaths of allegiance to her, as Duchess of Calabria, and inheriting with the title all the rights of her father in Naples and in Provence. To understand the situation of the royal family of Naples at this period, it is necessary to refer to the preceding reign. Charles the Second, the father of King Robert, had married Maria, heiress of Hungary, and having succeeded to that kingdom in right of his wife, on his death-bed he divided his dominions, bequeathing the throne of Hungary to his eldest son Charles Martel; while Naples and Provence were left to his younger son Robert. The princes of the elder branch thus excluded from the fairest part of the succession, never acquiesced in this division, although it had been confirmed by a solemn decree of the Pope, but were continually advancing claims on the kingdom of Naples: hence the singular connexion between the histories of Hungary and Naples during the whole of the fourteenth century; hence were two countries so remote and dissimilar brought in continual collision; hence sprang a series of domestic divisions, crimes, usurpations, and murderous wars, which long desolated the loveliest provinces of Italy; and hence, in the first instance, arose those complicated misfortunes

and extraordinary vicissitudes which chequered the life of Joanna of Sicily.

It was the singular fate of this queen during the whole of her eventful reign to suffer by the mistakes, the follies, or the crimes of her nearest connexions, and to be injured by her own virtues ; for the weaknesses of a man are sometimes the virtues of a woman : or at least, if the indulgence in the gentle and kindly feelings proper to her sex, as pity, tenderness and confidence, in despite of calculation and self-interest, may become weak or criminal in a woman when trusted with sovereign power,—it is the best argument that has yet been adduced in favour of the Salique law ; but the consequence is not surely necessary and inevitable, though from some examples left us in history, we might almost deem it so.

The first steps taken by the wise grandfather of Joanna, long before she could judge or act for herself, were the cause of many of her subsequent miseries and of the darkest imputations which rest on her memory.

In the first place, King Robert appointed as her governess and the guardian of her person, a woman who has obtained a tragical celebrity in Italian history by the name of Philippa the Catanese. She was the daughter of a fisherman of Catania in Sicily, and on a sudden emergency

she was employed by Queen Violante, the first wife of Robert, to nurse her infant son the Duke of Calabria. Philippa was gifted beyond her birth or her years; beautiful, intelligent, and aspiring, she recommended herself so much to the queen by her zeal and affection, that she became her principal attendant, and afterwards filled the same office to the second wife of Robert, queen Sancha, who was not less attached to her. Her foster-child, the Duke of Calabria, who tenderly loved her, married her to the seneschal of his palace, and appointed her lady of the bed-chamber to his wife; thus it happened that she was present at the birth of Joanna, and was the first to receive her in her arms. The elevation of this plebeian woman to offices of trust and honour about the persons of four princesses successively, the extreme attachment they all manifested for her, and the favour and confidence of King Robert during a period of forty years, appeared so offensive and so incomprehensible in those times, that it was ascribed to magic. In her character, in her destiny, in her extraordinary exaltation from the meanest station, to rank and power, and in her sudden and terrible fall, Philippa does in fact remind us of Leonora Galigai: but it was not certainly in this case the magic influence of a strong mind over a weak one:

and though Orloff calls her "*femme intrigante et sans mœurs*,"* yet it must be allowed that the worst offences charged against her appear exceedingly problematical, and seem to have originated in the universal jealousy with which her elevation and that of her family were beheld by the proud nobility. The power which Philippa obtained over the affections of Queen Joanna was one of the heaviest accusations against her unhappy mistress, and led to her own ruin and horrible death; yet, considering all the circumstances, nothing surely could be more natural and inevitable. If the appointment of the Catanese to be her governess was impolitic and disreputable, on account of her low origin and the offence it gave to many of the high-born ladies of the court, yet the confidence of King Robert, and the dispositions and qualities afterwards displayed by Joanna, prove her to have been not wholly unworthy of the trust reposed in her.

The next great error committed by Robert in the management of his infant heiress, was her marriage with his grand-nephew Andreas, the second son of Carobert King of Hungary. By this marriage he fondly hoped to extinguish all the feuds and jealousies which had long existed

* *Mémoires sur Naples.*

between the two kingdoms, by restoring to the elder branch of his family, in the person of Andreas, the possession of the throne of Naples, without prejudice to the rights of his granddaughter; neither does the arrangement appear at first view so impolitic as it eventually proved; it was founded in a principle of justice, and was rather hastily executed than imprudently devised.

Joanna was only five years old, and Andreas only seven, when this ill-fated union was celebrated at Naples with all possible splendour, and in the midst of feasts and rejoicings; the infant couple were thenceforward brought up together, with the idea that they were destined for each other; but as they grew in years they displayed the most opposite qualities of person and mind.

“For me,” said King Robert to Petrarch, who has himself recorded this memorable speech—“for me, I swear that letters are dearer to me than my crown; and were I obliged to renounce the one or the other, I should quickly tear the diadem from my brow.” Filled with this enthusiastic conviction of the advantages of learning, the king surrounded his granddaughter with the best preceptors in science and literature which could be procured throughout all Italy. Those chronicles which differ most on the character and conduct of Joanna, are yet all agreed

on one point ;—all bear testimony to her extraordinary talents and her love of literature :—and the Neapolitan historians assert, that at twelve years old, “ she was not only distinguished by her superior endowments, but already surpassed in understanding, not only every child of her own age, but many women of mature years.” To these mental accomplishments were added a gentle and generous temper, a graceful person, a beautiful and engaging countenance, and the most captivating manners.

Andreas, on the contrary, had been surrounded by his rude Hungarian attendants, and grew up weak, indolent, and unpolished, though without any of those evil dispositions and degrading and profligate propensities which have been imputed to him.* His father, the King of Hungary, had appointed as his preceptor a monk named Fra Roberto, or Friar Robert, the declared enemy of the Catanese, and her competitor in power. Of this monk, historians have left us a far more frightful and disgusting portrait than of his rival Philippa. It was his constant aim to keep his pupil in ignorance that he might keep him in subjection ; to inspire him with a dislike and jealousy of the Neapolitans, whom he was destined to govern, and keep up his partiality for the Hungarians, to whose

* See Historical Life of Joanna of Sicily.

manners, dress, and customs, he obliged him to adhere. The extreme indolence and pliability of the prince's temper aided the designs of this wretch, and enabled him to obtain an unbounded influence over the mind of his pupil. The good King Robert perceived too late the fatal mistake he had committed; he saw the miseries and perils he had prepared for his beautiful and accomplished heiress by this unequal marriage, and the compact being irrevocable, he endeavoured at least to obviate some of the threatened evils by excluding Andreas from any share in the sovereign power. In a general assembly of his nobles, he caused the oath of allegiance to be taken to Joanna alone as queen in her own right. But this precaution, so far from having the desired effect, added to the dangers he apprehended; while it gratified the Neapolitans, it excited the jealousy and anger of the Hungarians, and laid the foundation of many troubles and factions in the state.

Meantime the young Joanna, who could not yet judge of the policy or impolicy of the measures taken for her safety and personal welfare, grew up to the age of fifteen, happy in the studies and pleasures befitting her years—happy in the unconsciousness of the storms impending over her, and every day improving in

beauty and intellect. She showed at this time no dislike to her young husband, and no repugnance to the solemnization of their marriage contract: though Andreas, as he advanced in years, displayed the same slothful and imbecile temper for which he had been remarkable from infancy. They bore the title of Duke and Duchess of Calabria, and constantly resided together under the care of King Robert and Queen Sancha. The whole of the Royal Family inhabited the Castel Novo at Naples, which, with the strength of a fortress, united the magnificence of a palace. It contained at this time the finest library then existing in Europe, and its walls had been decorated by the paintings of Giotto, one of the first restorers of the art in Italy. Under the same roof resided the Princess Maria, the younger sister of Joanna; and Maria of Sicily, a natural daughter of King Robert, remarkable for her beauty, her accomplishments, and her gallantries; she was the mistress of Boccaccio, and his too celebrated Fiammetta, at whose command he wrote the *Decamerone*.*

* Maria of Sicily became the wife of Robert Count d'Artois. An old French writer is of opinion, that this Princess loved Boccaccio merely "pour son beau dire et sa belle plume, pour la rendre excellente et immortelle par son rapport à tout le monde de ses belles vertusi; mais l galant n'en fit rien; et la laissa trompée, et s'en alla écrire

King Robert died in 1343, leaving Joanna, at the age of fifteen, sovereign over three of the most beautiful countries in Europe—Naples, Provence, and Piedmont. On the refusal of Queen Sancha to accept the office of sole Regent, for which her capacity and virtues well fitted her, but which a mistaken idea of religious humility induced her to decline, he had appointed a council of Regency during the minority of the young queen, and had especially excluded Andreas and his Hungarian adherents from any participation in the government. But all his arrangements for the welfare of Joanna and for the safety and peace of the kingdom, were defeated by the intrigues and the wickedness of Fra Roberto, who interfered with the government in the name of his pupil Andreas. The young king and queen became little else than state prisoners in the hands of this monk and his Hungarian faction, who, by their arrogance, rapacity, and tyranny, drove away and disgusted all the friends of

ces deux livres menteurs, qui l'ont plus scandalisée qu'édifiée." Assuredly the kind of immortality which Boccaccio has bestowed on the Princess Maria is not exactly that which she anticipated: the Fiammetta, notwithstanding the reality, force, and beauty of the picture which her lover has left of her (considered as a portrait), will never bear a comparison with her contemporary, Laura,

"Basso desir non éch' ivi si senta,
Ma d'onor, di virtute——."



Joanna: the weak were oppressed, the great insulted; and the sovereigns, the court, and the populace, all trembled alike in the presence of an ignorant, ragged, dirty Friar. Petrarch, who about this time visited Naples as Envoy from the Pope, has left us, in one of his eloquent letters, a description of Fra Roberto, written in a strain of violent, but apparently just invective. "May Heaven," he exclaims, "rid the soil of Italy of such a pest!—a horrible animal, with bald head and bare feet, short in stature, swoln in person, with worn-out rags, torn studiously to show his naked skin, not only despises the supplications of the citizens, but from the vantage-ground of his feigned sanctity, treats with scorn the embassy of the Pope." Joanna wished to have attached Petrarch to her court, for she was able to appreciate his genius and his worth, and seems to have inspired him in return with the strongest admiration for her character and talents; on every occasion he speaks of her with esteem for her virtues, and pity for her helpless situation. But the court of Naples was at this time no enviable residence for a sentimental poet and a man of letters, in love with tranquillity and retirement: it was a continual scene of factious disturbances between the Neapolitans and the Hungarians, so that Petrarch compares the young



queen and her consort to “two lambs in the midst of wolves.” Joanna being sovereign in name only, and not in authority, conferred on Petrarch the only honours which it was in her power to bestow ; she appointed him her chaplain and almoner, titles not merely nominal, since they were accompanied by some valuable privileges. Petrarch left Naples in 1343.

About a year after the accession of Joanna, the Duke of Durazzo secretly carried off her younger sister Maria, the promised bride of Louis of Hungary, and married her. For the better understanding of what follows, it is necessary to observe here that the Princes of Durazzo, the Princes of Taranto, the reigning family in Hungary, and the reigning family in Naples, were all descended from a common ancestor, Charles of Anjou ; hence they were all related, being cousins in the second degree.

The coronation of Joanna was fixed for the 20th of September 1345 ; and while preparations were going forward for this grand ceremony, the young king and queen retired from Naples in the month of August, and went to take their diversions in the gardens of the Celestine monastery at Aversa. This town, so fatally celebrated for the tragedy which ensued, is situated about fifteen miles from Naples : the queen, who expected soon to become

a mother, and whose health had lately been very delicate, appeared restored by the change of air, the tranquillity and the enchanting scenery around her; all was happiness and repose, and nothing indicated the terrible catastrophe at hand. On the night of the 18th of September, Andreas was called from the queen's apartment, by the information that a courier had just arrived from Naples and waited to confer with him. In the gallery adjoining he was seized by some persons whose names were never exactly known; they stopped his mouth with their gloves, strangled him by means of a cord or handkerchief, and suspended his body from the balcony, whence, the cord breaking from the weight, it fell into the garden. The murderers were proceeding to bury it on the spot, but an alarm being given by the king's nurse, they fled precipitately and made their escape.*

It is necessary to pause for a moment in the narrative, and to observe that the popular accounts of this shocking event, and the accusation against Joanna of having contrived the murder of

* There is a story, often repeated, that Joanna was employed in twisting a silken cord for the purpose of strangling her husband, when he entered her apartment, and asked her what she was doing? To which she replied with a smile, "Twisting a rope to hang you with." It is hardly necessary to add, that this is a mere vulgar tradition, without the least foundation in truth.

her unfortunate husband, do not appear founded in truth.

It is not possible to produce here, and separately weigh and examine all the proofs and arguments brought together by historians, who differ on the question of her guilt or innocence; but it may be observed, that while all that is adduced against her rests on vulgar report or the invectives of her enemies, there are three considerations which appear conclusive in her favour. In the first place, Joanna had no particular reason to wish for the death of her husband, the father of her infant; for though it has been asserted by many authors that Joanna hated her husband, and took no pains to conceal her aversion, yet this is as positively denied by others; and if her hatred had been so public, the queen would hardly have had the assurance to make use of the expressions, “ my good husband, with whom I have always associated without strife,” which occur in her letter to the King of Hungary. And if she *had* wished for his death—as she is acknowledged by all to have possessed an extraordinary understanding—she would surely have contrived to execute her purpose in a manner less desperate, less foolish, and less perilous to herself. Secondly, it is agreed by all, that the disposition of Joanna was mild, tender, and gene-

rous ; that she was never known to commit an unjust or cruel action either before or after this transaction ; or give the slightest indication of such violence of temper, or such early depravity of heart as alone could have impelled her to connive at the assassination of her husband, the father of her unborn child, and this within her hearing, if not before her eyes ! It is too horrible for belief. The woman who, under such circumstances, could have committed such an atrocious crime at the age of seventeen, could never have either begun or ended there ; yet all historians, even her enemies and accusers, affirm, that from the age of seventeen, Joanna was a model of virtue, gentleness, and feminine discretion.

Thirdly ; not only all the best historians of Provence and Naples,—“ not only the most worthy, but what is of as much consequence in such matters, the most enlightened of her contemporaries—men independent of her favour and protection, remarkable for their freedom of censure, personally acquainted with her character, with that of her court and family, and with the political circumstances of her kingdom,—all these acquit her.” *

It is related, that when Joanna was informed of the fate of her husband, she remained for some

* See the Historical Life of Joanna of Sicily ; and Count Orloff's “ *Memoires sur Naples*.”

time speechless, and without shedding a tear. One historian imputes this suspension of her faculties to guilt and confusion ; another terms it the effect of terror and horror, which is at least as probable. The queen says of herself,—“ I have suffered so much anguish for the death of my beloved husband, that, *stunned* by grief, I had wellnigh died of the same wounds.” *

When the news of the murder of Andreas was spread through Aversa and Naples, a most extraordinary tumult ensued. The Hungarians, struck with consternation, fled in all directions. Joanna the next morning returned to Naples with a few attendants, and shut herself up in the Castel Novo, where, within two months afterwards, she gave birth to a son. Soon after her recovery from her confinement, she took the administration of affairs into her own hands ; she formed a council, composed of the friends of her grandfather Robert, and signed a commission to Hugh del Balzo to seek out the murderers of her husband, and execute justice on them without respect of persons. “ The assassination of Andreas,” says the historian of Joanna, “ appears to have been a sudden burst of desperate ferocity in a set of miscreants who feared the loss of their fortunes and lives under the sway of

* In her letter to the King of Hungary.

the implacable and equally unprincipled Friar ;” but who those miscreants were is still uncertain. Some of the chamberlains of Andreas were seized and put to the torture, according to the barbarous and stupid practice of those times. They accused, among others, Philippa the Catanese, who, since the death of Robert, had been created Countess of Montoni ; her son, the Count Evoli ; her granddaughter Sancha, a young and beautiful woman ; and Count Terlizi, the husband of the latter.

When Hugh del Balzo, invested with the full powers which Joanna herself had bestowed upon him, presented himself before the gates of the Castel Novo, the young queen without hesitation commanded the gates to be thrown open to him ; her astonishment and her anguish may be imagined, when her friends and favourites were summoned before him, accused,—upon the evidence of men who had been tortured almost to death before they had uttered a word to criminate themselves or others,—as accessories to the murder of Andreas, and dragged from her protection to expire in the most shocking and lingering torments that ingenious cruelty could devise.

Thence forward it is observed that a change ensued in the character of Joanna ; and in the death of her husband, and the horrible catastrophe of her foster-mother Philippa, and her companion

and play-fellow Sancha, she appears to have received a shock which she never afterwards recovered. Previous to her eighteenth year, her temper had been remarkably frank, cheerful, and confiding; but from that time a visible alteration took place. Though she displayed equal dignity and mildness in her deportment; though in the interior of her palace “she was so gracious, gentle, compassionate, and kind, that she seemed rather the companion than the queen of those around her,” (these are the words of Boccaccio); yet she was always more grave than gay, and was never known to have a familiar friend, favourite, or confidant of either sex, or to put entire trust in any of those about her person. Treachery had come so near her,—anguish and fear had struck her so deeply, that confidence and happiness seemed to have fled together:—the spring of her life was changed to winter; and her dawn, which ought to have been followed by sunshine and the cheerful day, settled into a cold, calm twilight, to be finally swallowed up in storms and midnight darkness.

More than two years after the death of Andreas, Joanna married, by the advice and recommendation of her ministers, her second cousin, Louis of Taranto, a brave, accomplished, and very handsome prince, who, from his singular beauty, acquired the

name of Phœbus, or the Day.* Soon afterwards, Louis King of Hungary, the elder brother of Andreas, raised a party against her, invaded her dominions, and, under pretence of revenging the murder of his brother, proclaimed his intention of seizing the crown for himself. But before he entered the kingdom of Naples as an enemy, he endeavoured to give some colour of justice to his cause, by solemnly accusing Joanna before the tribunal of Cola Rienzi, that illustrious democrat, who was at this time at the height of his power at Rome, and considered as the arbitrator of the minor States of Italy. Joanna did not disdain to defend herself by her deputies, and Rienzi heard the pleadings of both parties in public; but he refused to pronounce judgment between them, and left this great cause undecided. While it was pending, Louis of Hungary continued to advance, and in December 1347, he passed the frontiers of Naples. Wherever he appeared a black standard was carried before him, on which was painted the

* Count Orloff asserts that Joanna, "*amante trop empressée, ou femme irréfléchie*," was united to the Prince of Taranto in the first year of her widowhood, which, on a comparison of dates, appears evidently false. The death of Andreas took place in 1345; and her union with Louis was solemnized in August 1347. That she had long been attached to her handsome cousin may possibly be true.

murder of Andreas; a company of mourners, also habited in black, surrounded this horrible banner, on which the populace gazed with affright and disgust. In this terrific array, did Louis of Hungary advance without opposition as far as Aversa; and that ill-omened spot, which had already been the scene of midnight murder, was destined to witness another act of atrocity strongly characteristic of those dark and evil times. Amongst the nobles who joined Louis, upon a promise of safe conduct, was the Duke of Durazzo, who had married the younger sister of Joanna. He was a weak, but ambitious man, who seems to have been possessed with the idea, that if Joanna were once deposed or removed it would make way for the accession of his wife and her children to the throne; he was also one of those who were suspected, but without any reason, of participating in the murder of Andreas. When they arrived at Aversa, the Duke of Durazzo was desired by the King of Hungary to show him the place where his brother Andreas was killed. The Duke replied by denying all knowledge of the place or of the crime; but Louis, without listening to him, led the way to the fatal balcony in the Celestine monastery: he there accused him as the murderer of his brother, and desired him to prepare for death. Durazzo entreated for mercy,

but at a sign from Louis he was stabbed to the heart in his presence, his body thrown over the balcony, and his friends and attendants were forbidden on pain of death, to inter it. After the commission of this treacherous and cruel murder, Louis hastened on to Naples. On his approach some of the nobles were induced by bribes and promises to join his party. Some believed, or affected to believe, the queen guilty of the crimes imputed to her ; others fled to their castles and fortified themselves separately against the invader, or submitted to his arms. Joanna, taken by surprise, and surrounded by treachery and violence, had yielded to those of her friends and ministers, who advised her to take refuge in Provence, the beautiful and ancient inheritance of her family, till the storm was past. She accordingly embarked with her household in three galleys, and sailed from Naples ; while the giddy and versatile populace, who wanted resolution and fidelity to defend her from her enemies, crowded along the shores, weeping bitterly, lamenting her departure, and praying for her return.

On her arrival in her Provençal dominions, Joanna landed at Nice, and proceeded to Avignon, where Pope Clement the Sixth then held his court in the utmost splendour. In the presence of that Pontiff, and in a solemn assemblage of the Cardi-

nals and principal clergy, she pleaded her own cause against the King of Hungary, and proved the falsehood of all the imputations against her. Her address on this occasion, which she composed in the Latin tongue, and pronounced herself, has been described as "the most powerful specimen of female oratory ever recorded in history." The Hungarian ambassadors sent by the king, her enemy, to plead against her, were so confounded that they attempted no reply to her defence. The Pope and the Cardinals unanimously acquitted her, with every expression of honour and admiration, and her Provençal nobility crowded round her to proffer their services for the recovery of her Neapolitan dominions. While residing in Provence, Joanna was joined by her sister Maria, the widow of the murdered Durazzo, who with her infant children had escaped almost by miracle from the ruthless conqueror. The two sisters, who had always been affectionately attached to each other, met with transport, and Joanna adopted the children of Maria as her own.

Naples, in the mean time, had been a scene of horror. Louis, after staining that city with the blood of its chief inhabitants, and with his rude Hungarian followers and German mercenaries, scattering terror and lamentation along its beautiful shores, was at length driven away by a

terrible pestilence which had prevailed more or less throughout the whole of Italy, and extended its ravages to other parts of Europe. This was the memorable plague of which Boccaccio has left us so striking a description, and of which Petrarch's Laura died at Avignon about three weeks after the arrival of Queen Joanna in that city. On his departure from Naples, Louis left as his lieutenant, Conrad Wolf, a wretch worthy of his name, whose cruelties and exactions completed the desolation of that devoted country. The tyrannical and rapacious government of the Hungarians at length so disgusted and exasperated the Neapolitans, that they rose with one accord against the invaders, and the nobility sent a deputation to Joanna, inviting her to return, and promising their support and aid against her enemies. Joanna gladly availed herself of this summons, and, with a numerous and brilliant retinue of noble knights, who had sworn to die in her cause, she returned to Naples, where she was welcomed by her people with the most enthusiastic rapture. The court resumed its gaiety and splendour, for Louis of Taranto, the husband of Joanna, was in his habits as princely and magnificent as he was brave and handsome in person, and almost all the young nobility crowded to their banners. Those who in the late struggle had been disaffected or

neutral were pardoned; those who had stood faithful and had suffered from the tyranny of the Hungarians, were welcomed with joy and loaded with gifts and honours. Some attempts were made to enter into an accommodation with Louis of Hungary; but that fierce and cruel monarch, enraged at a reverse so little expected, rejected all pacific overtures with disdain, and returning with a large army, he again invaded Naples, but not with the same success; the people had learned the difference between his government and that of the mild Joanna, and everywhere they rose against him. Louis of Taranto led the armies of the queen, and opposed the mercenaries of Hungary with equal valour and prudence; the war still lasted two years, before the troops of the Hungarian king were finally driven from Naples, and it was marked by many vicissitudes, by many daring exploits, and by the usual accompaniments of misery, bloodshed, and desolation. Joanna, feeling for the wretched condition of her subjects, endeavoured to alleviate it by every means in her power; and Louis of Taranto, with the chivalrous feeling which distinguished his age and personal character, offered to terminate the horrors of this domestic war by encountering the King of Hungary in a single combat. The Hungarian monarch accepted the

challenge, but the duel, for some unknown reasons, did not take place. Pope Clement sent his legate to mediate between the two parties, and the King of Hungary, finding it impossible to retain possession of Naples, concluded a treaty on the terms required by Joanna; that is, the establishment of the government according to the will of her grandfather Robert, and the title of king for her husband Louis of Taranto.

Two incidents connected with this treaty will serve to show the spirit of those times, in the gross superstition which could cloud a brilliant intellect, and the magnanimity which could occasionally mingle with the most detestable ferocity. Joanna, in solemnly repeating her declaration of innocence, relative to the murder of Andreas, attributed the dissensions which existed between them to *sorcery*: and Louis of Hungary refused to accept the one hundred thousand florins, which the Pope had adjudged to him, as an indemnity for the expenses of the war, saying, with a fierce generosity, “I did not come hither to sell my brother’s blood, but avenge it!”

Peace was thus restored in 1353, after a sanguinary contest which had lasted more than four years from the first invasion of Louis of Hungary. A Bull being granted by Pope Clement for the coronation of Joanna and Louis, the ceremony

took place at Naples, and was performed with extraordinary splendour and rejoicings. Magnificent recompenses were distributed by the young sovereigns to those who had served them faithfully during the late war. The nobility tendered their allegiance with one accord ; the populace, enchanted by the transition from a cruel war to the blessings of peace, and by their delivery from their Hungarian oppressors, threw up their caps and shouted their congratulations ; the streets of Naples resounded with joy and exultation, and the whole land seemed to burst into a hymn of thanksgiving at this termination of all disasters, this promise of future felicity and peace. But poor Joanna ! she was doomed to taste of grief in every possible form ; and on this great day of triumph, which beheld her at length securely seated on the throne of her fathers, even while the shout of revelry echoed round her palace, there was weeping and wailing within. When, after their coronation, Louis and Joanna returned from their solemn cavalcade round the city, they found their only child, then about four years old, dead in her cradle ; by what accident does not appear, but apparently of some sudden fit or other disorder incidental to childhood. During the late war, Joanna's son by Andreas had been carried off into Hungary, and had died there ; and another little

daughter, born subsequently, also perished in her infancy : we may well believe that for sorrows and privations such as these, no outward prosperity could console the mother's heart.

In the year 1356, Joanna and Louis were invited by the Sicilians to reign over their country, and the next year Joanna was solemnly crowned at Messina ; but before she had entirely settled the government of her new kingdom, she was recalled to Naples by fresh disturbances and contentions, which in her absence had broken out between Philip of Taranto, the elder brother of her husband, and Louis of Durazzo, the brother of that Duke of Durazzo who had married her sister, and had been murdered by the King of Hungary. Both these princes were reduced to submission ; and on the death of Louis of Durazzo, whose turbulence and haughtiness had often agitated her kingdom and disquieted her own domestic peace, Joanna gave a strong proof of her benevolent and forgiving disposition. She took under her peculiar care his orphan son, Charles of Durazzo, educated him at her own charge, and treated him in all respects with the tenderness of a mother. This boy, destined to cause the destruction of his benefactress, was then about twelve years old.

Three years of comparative tranquillity ensued. In 1362, Louis of Taranto died of a fever, the

consequence of his own intemperance. He had latterly given himself up to a course of dissipation, which must have grieved and displeased his consort ; but she loved him to the last, in spite of the wrongs and infidelities, of which she had too often to complain. One of the women about the court, who was mistress of Louis, had endeavoured to palliate her own misconduct, by calumniating the queen. Louis either believed, or pretended to believe, this slander ; he burst into the most violent reproaches against his wife ; and it is even said, that in the height of his fury, he struck her. Joanna sent for the woman ; confronted her with her husband, and easily proved the falsehood of both ; but instead of punishing her rival and accuser, she merely dismissed her from the court, saying with dignity, “ Thank your God, that your enemy is your queen !” If we consider the passionate attachment which Joanna entertained for her husband, and the wrongs she had just received, as a woman, a wife, and a sovereign, a nobler, a more beautiful instance of female magnanimity, can hardly be imagined.

Being left a second time a widow, and without children, Joanna was advised by her council to enter into a third marriage, as necessary to the tranquillity of her kingdom. She agreed to the election of her ministers, whose choice had fallen on James

of Majorca, the son of the King of Majorca, and their union was celebrated with great magnificence. The marriage-feast was held at Gaëta, and a lovelier spot could hardly have been chosen to celebrate a royal bridal. A very singular incident distinguished the festivities on this occasion; Joanna had chosen as her partner in the dance Prince Galeazzo of Mantua, who, in his rapture for such courteous condescension, made a vow that he would requite the honour she had done him, by bringing to the foot of her throne two captive knights, to be disposed of as she thought fit. At the end of a year, he appeared before her with two knights of noble blood and approved valour, whom he had vanquished in single combat, and presented them to her as her slaves by all the laws of chivalry. Galeazzo having thus acquitted himself of his vow, the queen equally fulfilled her duty as a lady and a princess; she gave the knights their freedom, and sent them back to their country loaded with rich presents.

The Prince of Majorca bore a high character for honour and bravery. But Joanna was not destined to derive either happiness or advantage from this most luckless marriage. Within three months after their union, her husband quitted her to avenge the death of his father, who had been treacherously murdered by Peter

King of Arragon. Joanna was therefore left alone and unaided to guide her fickle people and rule her turbulent nobility. She had the grief to hear that her husband, whose valour was more rash than prudent, was first defeated, and afterwards,—though supported by the friendship and assistance of Edward the Black Prince,—taken prisoner and detained in Arragon. His generous queen paid an immense ransom for his freedom; but no sooner had he returned to Naples than he prepared another expedition to avenge his father. Joanna used every argument, and even descended to entreaties, to dissuade him from his purpose, but in vain; he pursued the war with all the inveterate obstinacy of hatred and revenge, and in the midst of his violent career he fell sick and died.

Joanna was again advised by her council to marry; but this time she deliberately refused, and resolved to struggle alone against the difficulties of her situation, rather than again subject herself to the pain and continual anxiety she had suffered from her union with James of Majorca.

The twelve following years, during which Joanna held the reins of government unassisted and uncontrolled, were marked by successes abroad and tranquillity and prosperity at home. The bands of robbers who had infested her kingdom, were destroyed or dispersed: by a mixture of

firmness and gentleness she curbed the pride of her nobility, so that it was said “they *trembled* at her frown, while they courted her smiles.” The strict administration of justice in her dominions, the security of the roads, and her excellent ordinances for the encouragement of commerce, were the admiration of neighbouring states. The mariner’s compass was first constructed, if not invented, in her reign, by one of her subjects, Gioja Flavio, a mathematician of Amalfi. Her court was considered one of the most brilliant in Europe, and the modesty of her own manners maintained its propriety. Her patronage of the arts and learning was liberal, and even magnificent. She built many churches and palaces, and endowed the hospital of St. Anthony. Those who have driven along the beautiful shore of the Mergellina, under the promontory of Posilippo, will remember the ruins of the unfinished palace beneath the cliff, with the blue sea breaking against its foundations—the “Palace of Queen Joanna,” as it is still called. The completion of this edifice was apparently interrupted by her subsequent misfortunes. Nothing can be more splendid than its situation ; nor more mournful in its appearance and the associations connected with it.

Joanna at this time undertook no foreign wars. Satisfied with defending her own people and her

own rights, she uniformly protected the poor against the rich, and the weak against the strong; and appears to have been really one of the most blameless women, and one of the most wise and magnanimous sovereigns that ever filled a throne; yet the close of her life was darkened by misfortunes even worse than those which assailed her in her youth. She had adopted, as it has been already related, Charles of Durazzo, and married him to her favourite niece Margaret, the daughter of her sister Maria. Charles of Durazzo possessed many great qualities which justified this preference, and the intentions of the queen to bequeath him her crown; but he had boundless ambition, a restless and warlike temper; and instead of remaining near Joanna as her defender and counsellor, (as her wishes and his own interests equally required of him,) he left her to seek military distinction under the banners of her old enemy the King of Hungary. She was thus once more left alone; and in a situation of great difficulty and danger, she was induced to enter into a fourth marriage, at the age of forty-six; her choice fell on Otho of Brunswick, a Prince of the Guelph family, distinguished for almost every accomplishment of mind and person, and of years equal to her own. Without demanding the title of king, or arrogating any power to himself, this

generous, brave, and amiable man, won and deserved the entire affection of his queen, and maintained her throne for some time in peace and security.

In the fourteenth century, during the latter years of Joanna's reign, two rival Popes divided Christendom between them. The Emperor of Germany, the Kings of England, Denmark, Sweden and Hungary and Bohemia, most of the states of Italy and Flanders, adhered to Pope Urban VI. While the Kings of France, Spain, Naples, Scotland, Cyprus, Savoy; the Dukedom of Austria, some of the Italian and many of the German states, acknowledged Clement VII. This event, which ranks among the grand data of modern history, is called the "Great Schism of the West."

Clement, who was a native of Geneva, and held his court at Avignon, was mild, learned, and pious; Urban, on the contrary, was violent, arrogant, treacherous, and cruel; he took up his residence at Rome, and during his pontificate that city was a scene of atrocity and oppression almost unparalleled, even in the time of the Borgias.

Urban had a nephew named Butillo, whom it was his ambition to raise to an independent principality. In those days the Popes assumed to themselves the right of appointing and dethroning monarchs; and Urban, at the very moment that

he professed a friendship for Joanna and accepted her gifts, dispatched a messenger to Charles of Durazzo, and offered to grant him the investiture of the crown of Naples, provided he would yield to his nephew Buttillo certain principalities in that kingdom. Charles of Durazzo was at first shocked at a proposal so monstrous; but he listened, debated, and reflected, till, by continually brooding over this project, its atrocity and ingratitude lessened to his view, and the temptation hourly increased. Before he could take any open measures against his benefactress, it was necessary to withdraw his wife and children from her power: they had constantly resided in the palace of Joanna, as a part of her family, and were all treated by her with truly maternal tenderness. When Margaret of Durazzo required permission to leave Naples and join her husband, the generous Queen suspected the motive of the request—for she had received some intimation of the designs entertained by Charles of Durazzo, and of his secret negotiations with the Pope—yet she suffered her niece to depart with all the honours due to her rank. It was their first separation and their last parting, for they never met again.

A few weeks afterwards, in 1381, Charles of Durazzo entered Italy at the head of a large army, and marched to take possession of the king-

dom, which he claimed by the Pope's investiture, in defiance of every law of justice, right, and gratitude. He advanced to Naples, and attacked Joanna in her capital. Otho of Brunswick had levied an army to oppose him, and while the two parties were contending round the walls and in the streets of Naples, the queen, who was in hourly expectation of succours from Provence, threw herself for present security into the fortress of the Castel Novo, and commanded the gates to be shut. At that moment a crowd of old men, women, and children, and a number of the clergy, flying from the ferocious enemy, presented themselves before the entrance, and implored a refuge and protection. Joanna had only a certain quantity of provisions: to admit these people was imprudent; to refuse them barbarous. She could not harden her heart against their cries and entreaties, and commanded them to be taken in to share her last asylum. Her generosity was fatal to her, for thus the provisions which would have lasted seven months were consumed in one. Being in expectation of relief from Provence, and from her brave husband, who was still before the walls, though the partisans of Durazzo had possession of the city, Joanna held out to the last, and until she and her companions had endured the extremity of famine. Two of her

nieces were with her; the eldest of these, Agnes, Duchess of Durazzo, was a woman of a covetous spirit, who had accumulated great riches; yet before the siege she had refused, on some pretence, to lend the queen a sum of money to aid in her defence; when this woman beheld the terrible sufferings of Joanna, and the miserable extremity to which herself and others were reduced, she was seized with vain remorse. She filled an immense vase with her gold and jewels, and carrying it into the apartment of the queen, she laid it at her feet, in silence and in tears. Joanna thanked her with a sad smile, but added, "that it was now too late. A sack of wheat," said she, "were more precious to me now, my fair niece, than all this treasure which you have reserved only to fall a prey to our common enemy!"

Meantime Otho of Brunswick made a desperate attempt to release his queen. He assembled all his forces, and attacked Durazzo immediately under the walls of the city. A battle ensued, which was obstinately contested; but neither Otho's talents as a commander, nor his bravery, animated as he was by honour and despair, availed him; he was wounded, struck from his horse, and taken prisoner, and his troops, overpowered and disheartened, fled towards Aversa. After this disastrous defeat it was in vain for

Joanna to resist. She had pledged herself, if not relieved, to surrender on the 26th of August, and accordingly on that day Charles of Durazzo entered the castle as conqueror; but so much did his former habits of love and reverence for the queen prevail even at such a moment, that from an involuntary impulse, he fell at the feet of his unhappy captive, and poured forth excuses and professions of respect:—he even addressed her by the tender and sacred name of *mother*—the name he had been accustomed to give her in his childish years.

The queen, restraining her indignation, merely replied by demanding for herself and her husband the treatment due to their rank, and recommending her friends in the castle to his mercy, particularly the women and clergy.

Four days after her surrender, the expected succours arrived from Provence. Ten galleys laden with provisions sailed into the bay of Naples, which, had they reached her before, would have saved her country, her throne, and her life. When Charles of Durazzo had the queen in his power, he endeavoured, first, to persuade, and then to force her to give up her title to the kingdom, and yield him up the sovereignty of Provence; and after many conferences he began to hope that he had at last terrified or beguiled

her into making some concession in his favour. With this idea he granted a safe conduct to the commanders of the Provençal galleys, and other chiefs who yet remained faithful to Joanna, and permitted them to appear in her presence for the last time ; but, instead of the result he had expected, this high-minded woman seized the opportunity to assert her own dignity and power, and confound her oppressor. She began by gently upbraiding her friends with the tardiness of their arrival ; she then solemnly revoked the declaration she had formerly made in favour of Durazzo ; claimed their allegiance for Louis of Anjou, as her heir and successor, and commanded them never to acknowledge as their sovereign the ungrateful traitor and usurper who had seized her throne, and now held her a prisoner in her own palace.—“ If ever,” said she, “ you are told hereafter that I have admitted his unjust claims, believe it not ! even if they place before you an act signed by my hand, regard it as false, or extorted from me by fraud or violence—believe it not !—believe not your own eyes !—believe nothing but these tears which I shed before you, and avenge them !”

Her adherents swore to obey her last commands, and left her presence weeping as they went. Durazzo, exasperated by her firmness,

ordered her to be more closely confined, and for eight months she suffered all the miseries and insults that could be heaped on her by a cruel and ungrateful adversary. Every day, however, fresh disturbances arose to distract him: the friends of Joanna were every where assembling; the populace were ready to rise in her behalf, and many nobles were in open rebellion against him. Perhaps Charles of Durazzo had not in the first instance contemplated the monstrous crime to which he was now driven, and by which he consummated his treason; but who that plunges into the torrent of ambition can tell whither it will carry him? The usurper, finding that as long as Joanna existed, there was neither repose nor security for him, resolved on her destruction. He despatched her to the castle of Muro, a dismal and solitary fortress in the Apennines, about sixty miles from Naples: and her spirit still holding out—even in this wretched abode, so that his threats were only answered by defiance, and his persuasions by scorn—he sent four Hungarian soldiers with orders to put her to death. The manner of her assassination is not certain, but it is most probable she was either strangled or suffocated; for when her body was afterwards exposed to public view in the church of Santa Chiara, it exhibited no sign of external vio-

lence. She was murdered on the 22nd of May, 1382, after a reign of thirty-nine years.

Such was the end of Queen Joanna; “a most rare and noble lady,” a just and beneficent queen, of whom Boccaccio has left this memorable testimony, “I not only esteem her illustrious and resplendent by conspicuous excellence, but the singular pride of Italy, and such as altogether no other nation has ever seen her equal.”

Joanna was buried in the Church of Santa Chiara, at Naples, where her tomb is now to be seen. Her memory is still revered by the populace, and her name familiar on their lips. If you ask a Neapolitan in the street who built such a palace, or such a church? the answer is generally the same, “Our Queen Joanna.”

Otho of Brunswick, her brave husband, remained two years a prisoner; he was afterwards released, on condition that he should never again enter the kingdom of Naples, and died on the field of battle, fighting in the cause of Louis of Anjou, the heir of Joanna. Her assassin, Charles of Durazzo, met with a doom which should seem to have been contrived by the avenging furies. After a turbulent unhappy reign of three short years, he deemed himself securely fixed on the throne of Naples, and proceeded to Hungary to wrest that crown from Maria, the daughter and

heiress of Louis of Hungary, the old enemy of Queen Joanna. The young Queen of Hungary, who was then about fifteen, was of a generous, frank, and noble nature ; but her mother, the Regent Elizabeth, was more than a match for Durazzo in artifice and cruelty. By her machinations he was decoyed into the apartment of Maria, and while he stood reading a paper, a gigantic Hungarian, secretly stationed for that purpose, felled him to the earth with his sabre. His death, however, was not instantaneous : he lingered for two days in agonies, neglected and abandoned ; at length his enemies, becoming impatient of his prolonged existence, and fearful of his recovery, caused him to be suffocated or strangled.

“ Voilà,” says Brantome, after relating the death of Joanna and the fate of her murderer, “ Voilà un juste jugement de Dieu, et une noble et brave princesse, vengeresse de son sang innocent.

“ Voilà aussi la fin de cette brave Reyne qu’on a calomniée bien légèrement.”

Gaillard in his “ Rivalité de la France et de l’Espagne,” terminates his account of Joanna of Naples by observing, that history affords no subject more powerfully dramatic than the life of this queen. In fact, what splendid materials for tragedy and romance—for a Shakspeare or a

Scott—in the characters, passions, incidents, and wild vicissitudes of which I have just given a rapid and superficial sketch! Joanna herself, with all her elegance and loveliness; her tenderness and her magnanimity; her wrongs, her sorrows, and her miserable end:—the gifted, intriguing Catanese;—her daughter, the beautiful and faithful Sancha; the villain Friar; the chivalrous Prince of Taranto; the fierce implacable Louis of Hungary; the perfidious, ambitious Durazzo; with Boccaccio and his Fiammetta; and then Petrarch appearing occasionally among them like a superior intelligence, a being of another sphere:—what a group to be brought together within the same canvass! what variety! what brilliant contrast! what light and shade! what capabilities of scenery and costume, in the country, the manners, and the age! La Harpe has written a tragedy on the story of Joanna which is as dry and formal as the rest of his tragedies; the use he has made of the magnificent materials before him reminds us of the pontiff who demolished the interior of the Colosseum to build himself a palace out of its sublime fragments. There is also a French novel founded on the story of Philippa, entitled “*L’Histoire de la Catanoise*,” and published in 1731, but I have not been able to meet with it.

JOANNA II. OF NAPLES.

THE crimes and miseries of his family ceased not with the horrible catastrophe of Durazzo. He left two children, who wore successively his usurped crown. Ladislas, his son, equally ambitious, cruel, and unprincipled, after a reign of thirty years spent in contending for the possession of his throne, perished at length the victim of his own depravities. During this period literature was neglected, the arts declined, and Ladislas, while he lived, was considered as the scourge of the countries he governed. He died in 1414, and was succeeded by his sister, the Princess Joanna. In the Neapolitan histories the two Joannas are distinguished as "Queen Giovanna," and "Queen Giovannella," and they are so very different in conduct and character, that in justice to Joanna the *first*, she should never be confounded with Joanna the *second*. The virtues and talents of the former could not indeed avert the most terrible

misfortunes from herself and her kingdom ; but a mere caprice of her feeble and worthless namesake entailed upon Italy two centuries of desolating war. She it was who called in those herds of French wolves, which, rushing down the Alps, “ drank th’ ensanguined waters of the Po,” and spread war, pestilence, and famine through the fertile plains of Southern Italy. There was a prophecy current at Naples, in her time, that “ the last of the Durazzi should be the ruin of her country ;” and Joanna, who was perhaps the immediate occasion of this prophecy, was certainly the remote cause of its fulfilment.

She was born at Naples in 1371, and was the only daughter of Charles of Durazzo by his wife Margaret, the favourite niece and adopted daughter of the first Joanna. At the death of her father she was about fifteen, and during the minority of her brother Ladislas, remained under the guardianship of her mother, who had been declared Regent. The kingdom was divided between the party of Ladislas, and that of Louis of Anjou, who were both in their infancy ; and Margaret of Durazzo the mother of Ladislas, and Marie de Blois the mother of Louis, were at the head of the respective parties. These two women were very different in character, but they were equal in talents, and for twenty years carried on

the terrible struggle for power with equal boldness, capacity, and obstinacy, while armies moved at their bidding, and statesmen and warriors were but as the tools with which they worked out their purposes.

Ladislas, as he grew up, displayed all the qualities of a bold but fierce soldier; his own military talents, combined with the art and the firmness of his mother, and a number of concurring circumstances, at length secured him the superiority over his rival, and about the year 1399 the court was once more fixed at Naples.

Amid these wars and intrigues, in continual vicissitudes of flight or victory, sometimes in a camp or fortress, sometimes in a convent or mixing in the court of her perfidious and profligate brother, Joanna spent the first twenty-eight years of her life. It was proposed in this interval to put an end to the war by uniting Joanna to Louis of Anjou; but the young prince shrank with horror from the idea of marrying the daughter of a murderer, and his mother found it impossible to vanquish his repugnance to the match. When Ladislas was at length in peaceable possession of his kingdom, his first care was to consolidate his power by forming a suitable alliance for his sister, and he married her, in 1403, to William, the son of Leopold III. Duke of Austria; within three

years she became a widow, and returned to Naples, where she resided in the court of her brother during the remainder of his reign.

The conduct of Joanna both before and after her marriage had been scandalously profligate; equally without beauty or virtue she yet contrived to keep a strong party round her, for she had talents of a certain class, and what she wanted in understanding was supplied by artifice. All the opprobrium with which her former life had covered her did not prevent her from being proclaimed queen as the heiress of her brother Ladislas, and on his death in 1414, his sceptre, ill gotten and blood-stained as it was, passed into her hands to be farther polluted and degraded, and at length flung, like a fire-brand, between the rival houses of France and Spain. Joanna was in her forty-fourth year when she ascended the throne. Among the unworthy favourites who had surrounded her as Duchess, was a certain Pandolfo Alogo, a man of plebeian birth but of singular beauty of person; he had been her cup-bearer, and on her accession she created him grand seneschal, or chamberlain, one of the highest offices under the crown, since it gave him the disposal of the principal part of the revenues; his power over the queen was unbounded, and he used it, or rather abused it, with

a degree of audacity, which rendered himself an object of hatred and his mistress of scorn.

But in a short time he found a formidable rival in the famous Sforza, the first of that name, and founder of that dynasty of Sovereigns which afterwards reigned over Milan.

During the intestine wars which for the last fifty years had set at variance all the minor states of Italy, a class of men had arisen, who by degrees almost equalled themselves with princes. These were the *Condottieri*, or leaders of mercenary bands, who sold their services for stated periods to the highest bidder, and when not in the pay of any state or sovereign, lived by plunder or by raising contributions on the towns and peasantry. Sforza, whose real name was Muzio Attendola, had risen from the ranks by his valour and intelligence during the reign of Ladislas. He was distinguished as one of the most formidable of these *Condottieri*, from the number and discipline of his followers, as well as his own military prowess; and on the accession of Joanna, he was considered as the most efficient support of her throne. His exploits, his bravery, and his personal advantages, gradually gained him an ascendancy over the weak, excitable Joanna; but Pandolfo Alopo, who saw with terror the decline of his power, contrived to fill the queen's mind

with jealousy, and at length extorted from her an order by which Sforza was suddenly arrested and closely imprisoned. The contentions and intrigues of these two favourites had thrown the whole kingdom into confusion, and excited the indignation of the nobility, and the murmurs or derision of the populace. The counsellors of Joanna represented that the only expedient to restore tranquillity, was a marriage with some foreign prince, whose firm administration would awe her subjects, and strengthen her government at home and abroad. Though the queen was no longer young, and her frailties but too public, a crowd of competitors presented themselves, and her choice fell on James de Bourbon, Count de la Marche, a nobleman of illustrious birth, but without sovereign power; he was distinguished as a military leader, and possessed of many generous and elevated qualities; but it was not to these he owed the honour or dishonour of Joanna's preference. The Count de la Marche was distantly related to Charles VI. the reigning King of France; and the queen and her counsellors hoped that by this election they would detach the French king from the interest of Louis of Anjou, who had never ceased to advance his claims to the crown of Naples. Pandolfo Alopo had done every thing in his power to avert this intended

marriage ; he beheld in a legitimate partner of the throne and heart of Joanna, the downfall of his own disgraceful power. But finding that the unanimous voice of the nobles and the people rendered such a measure inevitable, he endeavoured to provide for his own safety by forming a numerous party against James de Bourbon, previous to his arrival. Farther to strengthen himself, he made overtures to Sforza, who remained in his dungeon in perfect ignorance of the cause or the author of his disgrace ; him Alopo visited, expressed his pity for his misfortunes, and assured him that his own influence and that of his sister Catherine d'Alopo, should be employed in his favour. Having thus raised the hopes and the spirits of the prisoner, he returned a few days after ; " My sister," said he, " has been indefatigable in her exertions for you, and you well know, illustrious Sforza, that even my power is as nothing compared to hers : I now come from her to tell you, that you are not only free, but that the queen acknowledges her injustice towards you, restores you to her favour, and offers you once more the baton of Grand-Constable, which in her name I bring you."

Alopo having thus liberated his rival from the dungeon to which his own machinations had condemned him, found it easy to induce him to accept

the hand of the woman to whom he believed himself so much indebted, and this strange coalition was sealed by the marriage of Sforza with Catherine d'Alopo. While these intrigues were going on in the court of Naples, the Count de la Marche, attended by a brilliant train of French knights, arrived to claim the hand of his bride. The marriage was celebrated with due magnificence, and on the same day Joanna bestowed on her husband the title of king. She was then in her forty-sixth year.

If the queen had hoped to find in the Count de la Marche a convenient husband, who would consider the honour of sharing her throne sufficient amends for a dishonoured bed ; or if Pandolfo and Sforza had expected to meet with a monarch who was to be swayed to their purposes, and to retain either by their own audacity or the influence of the queen, the power they had alternately exercised, all were equally mistaken. The new king had believed, or wished to believe, that the reports of Joanna's conduct were either false or exaggerated ; but after his arrival at Naples, the whole truth by degrees opened upon him ; disclosures the most wounding to a husband's ear met him on every side, and his was not a spirit tamely to submit to disgrace. Shame, jealousy, and rage by turns possessed him, and using the power and

the dignity of a king to revenge his injuries, he ordered Pandolfo and Sforza to be seized and imprisoned ; the former was first put to the torture, confessed his guilt, and was then beheaded ; others of the queen's immediate favourites and dependants were put to death or banished ; and Joanna herself was confined to her own apartments, deprived of all the honours due to her rank, and guarded day and night by a French captain, one of her husband's retainers, an ill-favoured, iron-visaged old man, with a heart as hard as his armour, equally inaccessible to pity and bribery. Here for some months Joanna spent her time in weeping over her fate, rather than lamenting her past errors, and forming projects of escape, not vows of reformation.

In the mean time, James de Bourbon governed almost absolutely in her name and his own. Joanna had in many instances incurred the just contempt of her subjects ; but her mild rule and gentle disposition contrasted with the tyranny and ferocity of Ladislas, had gained her many hearts ; and the Neapolitans could not look on with absolute indifference, while her husband, a foreigner, treated their native Queen with a degree of severity and indignity, which at length roused their Italian blood to mutiny and vengeance. The imprudence of James furnished them other causes

of discontent ; he committed the usual, but dangerous error of preferring his own countrymen to the people he had come to govern ; and honours and offices were lavished on his French followers, to the exclusion of the Neapolitans, who made the real or imagined wrongs of the queen the plea for their discontent and disaffection. There were others, however, who were apparently influenced by more honourable or more disinterested motives ; and at the head of these was a young Neapolitan, whose name was Gianni or Sergiano Carraccioli. Joanna, by an artful show of submission to her husband's will, and by basely betraying one or two of her own friends into his power, had so wrought upon him, that he gave her permission to attend a marriage-feast, given by one of the nobles who were in the plot. Carraccioli and his friends were in waiting to receive her, fell upon her guards, massacred them, and carried off the queen in triumph to the Castel Capuana, calling on the Neapolitans to rise in her behalf. The people were seized with a kind of loyal intoxication ; they flew to arms, surrounded the Castel Novo with shouts of execration, and were about to force the gates and inflict summary vengeance on the devoted king, when he escaped by a private way, and threw himself, with a few friends, into the Castel del Ovo ; a fortress situated upon a rock in the

bay of Naples, and joined to the mainland only by a narrow mole, defended by drawbridges.

Joanna was once more absolute upon her throne, and her first care was to reward her liberators: the chivalrous Carraccioli, who had first engaged in her cause, quickly assumed that ascendancy in her heart, and in her counsels, which had been possessed by Alopo; and every favour that the gratitude of a woman and a queen could bestow, was freely lavished on him. Sforza was released from his dungeon; all the French were deprived of their offices, which were bestowed on Neapolitans, and the court became once more a scene of gaiety, dissipation, and intrigue.

In the mean time James de Bourbon remained shut up in the Castel del Ovo, where, being in want of provisions and all succours intercepted, he would have been forced to surrender at discretion, but for the interference of some of Joanna's wisest counsellors, who were anxious to avoid this additional scandal; they undertook to negotiate between the queen and her husband, and at length a hollow reconciliation was effected on terms the most humiliating to James. It was agreed that he should resign the title of king, and be content with that of Prince of Taranto; that all his French followers should be dismissed from his service and sent back to France; and

that the sovereign power should be lodged exclusively in the person of the queen. To these hard conditions the unfortunate prince acceded, not without many a painful struggle between pride and necessity; but his situation was critical and admitted no alternative; he signed the articles submitted to him, and returned to inhabit the royal palace, no longer as king but merely as the husband of the queen.

Where mutual wrongs and injuries, and those of the most unpardonable description, had struck so deep, it could hardly be expected that a reconciliation on such terms could be either sincere or durable. James felt himself a spectacle of derision and humiliation in a court crowded by insolent and aspiring favourites, and his gloomy unbending deportment betrayed his internal disgust. Joanna, who was a better dissembler, concealed her feelings, and only waited a favourable opportunity to rid herself of one whom she now regarded merely as a constraint on her pleasures and a spy on her actions. The vengeance of the queen was for some time retarded by the policy of Carraccioli, but it was not the less determined, and the moment at length arrived. One evening, as they were seated at supper in the palace, a dispute arose relative to some of the French knights who still remained in the kingdom, con-

trary, as Joanna averred, to the express stipulation on that subject. The contention rose high; and at length James rising from the table, with some strong expressions of contempt and indignation, retired to his own apartment. Joanna, instigated by Carraccioli, had previously taken her measures; she immediately ordered the doors to be barred and bolted, placed a guard before them, and that chamber became the dungeon of her husband for three long years. It was now her turn to tyrannize, and though a natural mildness of temper prevented her from proceeding to the last extremities against her unfortunate husband, yet no remonstrances or entreaties from the most powerful monarchs could induce her to liberate him, or soften the rigorous treatment to which he was subjected, till Pope Martin V. interfered in his behalf, through his legate Morosini. At his request James was released and retired almost immediately to his principality of Taranto. Thither persecution and mortification followed him, and at length, soured by disappointment and almost broken hearted, he returned to France. Passing through Besançon he was lodged for a few nights in a convent of Franciscans, and in a sudden fit of religious melancholy or enthusiasm he assumed the habit of this order, in which he died about 1438. James deserved a better fate, but it may

be observed, that having married merely from motives of ambition such a woman as Joanna, and accepted a throne from her hands, a little more suavity of temper and conduct had, perhaps, ensured his power over her, and enabled him, without compromising his own honour, to remove from her those favourites who had disgraced her court and sullied her reputation. But he had been too rash in his projects of reform ; he began by making himself detested, and this with every personal advantage which might have secured him the heart of his wife and an ascendancy over her mind. All his excellent qualities were neutralized by that gloomy asperity of temper which, if carried into his convent-cell, must have rendered him as wretched in his character of a monk as he had been in that of a monarch.*

* An old French author, who does not give James much credit for his conversion, draws a ludicrous picture of him in his monkish habiliments.—“Olivier de la Marche, qui était alors à Besançon, et le vit quand ce roi s’y vint rendre Cordelier, dit qu’il se faisait porter par quatre hommes en une civière, telle sans aucun différence que les civières que l’on porte les fumiers et les ordures, et était à demi-couché (quel sot et fat !) demi-appuyé et levé à l’encontre d’un méchant dérompu oreiller de plume, vêtu pour toute parure d’une longue robe de gris de petit prix : et était ceint d’une corde nouée à la façon d’un Cordelier, et en la tête avait un gros bonnet blanc, que l’on appelle une culle, nouée ou bridée par dessous le menton. Il ne lui eut fallu

But we must return to Joanna. The power of Carraccioli daily increased, so that under the title of seneschal of the palace, he in fact reigned as king. He was a man of consummate art as well as great ambition, and before his authority was perfectly established, his government was so conducted as to please both the nobles and the people. Were there any whose talents or whose accomplishments made him dread a rival in power or in love?—he quietly removed them from the precincts of the court, by giving them some honourable employment at a distance. Thus the young Count Origlia, who had attracted the notice of Joanna, was sent as ambassador to the council of Constance; an office which he accepted with unsuspecting gratitude: while Sforza, the valiant Sforza, was dispatched to Rome, to watch over the queen's interests in that city, and to oppose another famous leader of the age, Braccio, who had sold his service to the Pope.

But it was not long before Sforza began to penetrate the designs of his rival. Carraccioli, by withholding money and supplies for the troops, continually crossed his best concerted measures,

qu'une plume de coq sur la bonnette, et voilà le galant bien vêtu ! Je crois que si la Reyne sa femme l'eut ainsi vu habillé et embéguiné, elle, qui était toute gentille et d'esprit, s'en serait bien moquée !"

and checked the progress of his arms. Sforza, exasperated by his treachery, and having in vain attempted to open the queen's eyes to the real character of her favourite, tendered back his ensigns of command, and the royal banner, under which he had hitherto conquered in her name. Having thus formally renounced her service, he immediately joined the party of Louis of Anjou, whose pretensions to the kingdom of Naples, founded on the last will of Joanna I. were still in full force, and acknowledged by many of the foreign and many of the native princes.

While Louis, supported by the almost invincible Sforza, advanced towards Naples, the queen, or rather Carraccioli, who was now all-powerful, opposed them by a grand stroke of policy. Joanna called in the aid of Don Alphonso, surnamed the Magnanimous, king of Arragon and Sicily, who had some distant hereditary claims upon her throne; and being now too old to offer him her hand, she formally adopted him as her son, and declared him her heir, on condition that he would defend her with heart and arms against her enemies. Alphonso, then in the flower of his age, handsome, brave, ambitious, was engaged by every motive of generosity and policy to attend the summons of an oppressed queen, who besought his assistance, and offered him so rich and enviable

a heritage as his recompense. He first dispatched a powerful fleet, with some of his best troops on board ; and soon afterwards landed at Naples with a splendid and martial retinue, and made his triumphant entry into that city, July 7, 1421. Braccio changing sides, was induced to take the command of the queen's troops, and again opposed to Sforza. These two celebrated generals were personal and intimate friends, though they were rivals in military glory, and almost always combating for opposite interests. After various vicissitudes of war, in which both displayed consummate generalship, Braccio resolved, if possible, to reconcile Sforza to Joanna ; he succeeded ; Sforza could not resist the entreaties and caresses of the queen, and the flatteries of Alphonso. Again changing sides, with marvellous facility, he assumed the command which Braccio resigned to him, and with Sforza, victory returned to the banners of Naples.

Joanna, meantime, was declining in age ; and her natural feebleness of character increasing with her years, she was more under the personal control of Carraccioli than ever. The favourite, released from his fears of Louis, now dreaded the influence of Alphonso ; the brilliant qualities of the latter had rendered him so popular with the people, and so beloved by Joanna, that Carraccioli beheld

himself eclipsed, or feared to be so ; he contrived to fill the queen's mind with the darkest suspicions of her adopted son : he called to her recollection the conduct of her father, Charles Durazzo, towards *his* benefactress and adopted parent, the first Joanna ; the example was too recent to be forgotten ; might not Alphonso remember it too, and profit by it to her ruin ? The suggestion once admitted, her own imagination, and the artifices of Carraccioli, soon turned suspicion to conviction. Alphonso, not aware of the mistrust and aversion which were gaining upon the mind of the queen, made an imprudent display of his power, which gave some colour of truth to the insinuations of his enemy ; and Joanna no longer saw in him a son and a defender, but an ungrateful traitor, who only watched an opportunity to seize on her kingdom, and carry her off to a dungeon in Spain or Sicily. In an agony of rage and terror, she shut herself up in the Castel Capuana, and wrote to Sforza, who was at a distance with his troops, to fly to her succour ; he obeyed the summons instantly, and Alphonso and his Arragonese thus converted into enemies in their own despite, were obliged to stand on the defensive. Several battles were fought, in which Sforza had generally the advantage ; but Alphonso took and kept possession of

the city of Naples, and made Carraccioli his prisoner ; and these and other successes kept the issue doubtful for some time. While the fierce struggle continued, Joanna solemnly revoked her adoption of Alphonso ;—absolved her subjects from the allegiance they had sworn to him as the heir apparent to her crown ; and,—with a strange versatility !*—declared Louis of Anjou her son and heir in his stead, with all the titles and privileges she had formerly bestowed on Alphonso. Thus Louis found himself, by the most unexpected turn of fortune, by a mere feminine caprice, assured of that throne for which himself, his father, and his grandfather had for forty years striven in vain.

This famous treaty, which was followed by such tremendous consequences not only to Naples but to all Italy,† was signed by Joanna, at Nola, June 2, 1423, two years after Alphonso had been called over to assist her against Louis.

Whatever disasters eventually hung on this memorable compact, Joanna had no reason to repent it during her own life. Louis had not all

* “ Nella instabilità, sola fu stabile,” says the Italian historian of Joanna.

† It led to the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. which in its turn, involved all Europe in long and sanguinary wars.

the brilliant qualities of Alphonso, but neither had he his restless ambition. Generous, gentle, frank, and brave, he won and deserved the confidence and affection of Joanna, and repaid the favours and honours she had conferred upon him, with a submission and devotion more than filial ; —the two rivals were indeed worthy of each other, and of the high destiny to which they were called. Neither would abandon his pretensions ; but Alphonso was called from Italy by the affairs of Spain, and sailed from Naples in October 1423 ; he left his brother Don Pedro to continue the war, assisted by Caldora, another famous Condottiere, who, in the true spirit of his military trade, soon afterwards changed sides and went over to Louis.

Joanna had previously redeemed her favourite Carraccioli, by exchanging for him many of the best generals of Alphonso, made prisoners by Sforza ; and about the beginning of the year 1424 we find Joanna, or rather Carraccioli, again settled tranquilly in the government of Naples. It was not, however, in the power of the favourite to injure Louis of Anjou in the estimation of his mistress. The prudent conduct of that amiable Prince gave no cause of umbrage, and Carraccioli was obliged to remain satisfied with removing

him on different pretences as far from the court as possible.

Shortly afterwards the tranquillity of Joanna's government was threatened by that turbulent Braccio, who had been alternately her defender and her enemy; and having lent his sword and skill to all the powers of Italy by turns, had now resolved to win an independent sovereignty for himself; he had seized on Capua, and was now besieging Aquila. Sforza, his old friend and adversary, was sent against this formidable leader; he had proceeded northwards as far as the banks of the river Pescara, when, as he was riding forwards to give his orders to cross the river, his horse plunged with him into a morass, and horse and rider disappeared: thus, after having stood the encounter of a hundred battles, perished this remarkable man. His death threw the court of Naples into consternation, and Joanna bitterly wept the loss of her friend and defender; all his titles and offices were at once bestowed on his son Francesco Sforza, except the staff of high-constable, which was given to Caldora, with orders to proceed to Aquila: Braccio and Caldora met before the gates of that city; the former was completely defeated, and died a few days afterwards of his wounds.

The battle of Aquila would have secured to Joanna the tranquil possession of her throne, if the traitor Carraccioli, jealous of the increasing favour of Louis, had not again made overtures to Alphonso; and the interior of Joanna's palace exhibited at this time a scene of perfidy and depravity, from which the mind recoils in disgust. The influence of Carraccioli over the queen had long ceased to be that of affection or confidence, and had become merely a weakness or habit. He treated her with the utmost insolence and arrogance; it is even related, that when she hesitated to grant his unreasonable demands, he not only reviled her with the most injurious language, but even beat this miserable and doating old woman until she complied with his wishes.

But latterly Carraccioli had met with a degree of obstinacy in his feeble mistress, which was wholly unexpected, and appeared to him incomprehensible; this energy she owed, not to herself, but to a new confidante, the Duchess of Sessa, a woman as wicked as Carraccioli, and excelling him infinitely in all the talents of intrigue; she was his deadly but his secret enemy, and had vowed his destruction.

Carraccioli bore the titles of Count of Avellino, and Duke of Venosa and of Melfi. He was seneschal of the kingdom, and held other high

and important offices ; his riches were incalculable, and his power to all appearance boundless ; but not satisfied with all this, he dared to demand of the queen the investiture of the Principality of Salerno, which had generally been conferred on the princes of the blood royal. Joanna, acting under the influence of the Duchess of Sessa, absolutely refused this request, and even went so far as to upbraid Carraccioli with his insatiate avidity, which no gifts nor favours could satisfy. The favourite, astonished and furious at a denial so unlooked for, burst into a torrent of reproaches, and finding these availed nothing, from words he proceeded to outrages ; he struck her a violent blow on the face, which made the blood gush from her mouth, and then turning his back on her, abruptly quitted the apartment, leaving the miserable queen, bathed in tears, and almost suffocated with impotent rage. In this condition she was found by the Duchess of Sessa, who from an anti-room had listened to the dispute. The moment was favourable to her views ; she extorted from the queen, without much difficulty, a warrant for the arrest of Carraccioli, and, resolving not to trust to the feebleness of Joanna, she sent a party of her own friends and dependants to execute it—but with secret orders not to arrest, but to assassinate Carraccioli.

On the 17th of August 1432, the day on which he had celebrated the marriage of his son with the daughter of Caldora, Carraccioli was called from his chamber about midnight, under pretence of a message from the queen; and the warrant being shown to him, he was at the same moment felled to the ground, and his brains dashed out with a battle-axe. When the news of his death was brought to Joanna she wept bitterly, and appeared inconsolable; but all the estates of Carraccioli were confiscated, and his murderers remained, unsought for and unpunished.

During the next three years the Duchess of Sessa governed almost absolutely in the queen's name; and sometimes intriguing with Alphonso, sometimes with Louis, she kept the rivalship of these princes constantly alive, and the court and kingdom in perplexity and confusion. At length, in 1434, Louis of Anjou died of a fever at Cosenza in Calabria. His fidelity and devotion to the queen, his adopted mother, had never been shaken either by her caprices, or the intrigues and provocations of her unworthy favourites; and Joanna was perhaps more truly attached to him than she had ever been to any human being. Her grief for his loss was so deep and so sincere, her tears so incessant, that her feeble frame sank under the weight of affliction, and within a few weeks after



the death of Louis she expired, in the 65th year of her age, after an unhappy, disgraceful, and unquiet reign of twenty years. Her people could not respect her, but neither could they hate her: all her faults and follies could not prevent her from being loved and lamented. Such is the influence which a mild temper, and sweet and gracious manners can exercise from a throne; but had she never reigned, what disgrace had been spared to her memory, what mischief and what misery to her country! Her few good qualities were buried with her, but “the evil that she did, lived after her;” the arts and sciences which had flourished under Robert, and the first Joanna, fled in affright before the ruffian Ladislas, and turned away in shame from the corrupt court of his sister. She had neither the understanding to appreciate, nor the power to protect them; the only accomplishment in which she excelled was dancing. Joanna, as a last proof of her affection for Louis of Anjou, had left her crown to his brother and heir, René of Anjou; but after her death, Alphonso of Arragon invaded Naples, wrested the crown from René and transmitted it to his own posterity. René retired to Provence, and resided at Aix, his hereditary capital, cultivating poetry, painting, and music, and presiding over jousts and tournaments. This “bon Roi René,” as he is



called in the old histories, bore during his life the titles of King of Naples, Sicily, and Jerusalem, without possessing a foot of land in any of those countries. He was the father of Margaret of Anjou, the heroic wife of our Henry the Sixth.

ISABELLA OF CASTILE.

SHOULD we seek through the pages of history for the portrait of a sovereign such as the Supreme Spirit of Good might indeed own for his vice-regent here on earth, where should we find one more blameless and beautiful than that of Isabella? or should we point out a reign distinguished by great events—events of such magnitude as to involve in their consequences not particular kings and nations, but the whole universe, and future ages to the end of time—where could we find such a reign as that of Isabella, who added a new world to her hereditary kingdom? or did we wish to prove that no virtues, talents, graces, though dignifying and adorning a double crown and a treble sceptre; nor the possession of a throne fixed in the hearts of her people; nor a long course of the most splendid prosperity, could exempt a great queen from the burthen of sorrow which is the lot of

her sex and of humanity ; where could we find an instance so forcible as in the history of Isabella ?

This illustrious woman was the daughter of John the Second, King of Castile and Leon, and born in 1450, four years before the death of her father. King John, after a long, turbulent, and unhappy reign, died at Medina-del-Campo, leaving by his first wife, Maria of Arragon, a son, Don Henry, who succeeded him ; and by his second wife, Isabella of Portugal, two children in their infancy, Alphonso and Isabella.

To account for the accession of Isabella to the throne of Castile,—an event, which during the first years of her life seemed scarce within the verge of probability,—it is necessary to look back a little.

Spain, in the middle of the fifteenth century, was divided into four separate kingdoms, Castile, Arragon, Navarre, and the Moorish kingdom of Granada ; the political institutions of Castile and Arragon were nearly alike, and though the form of government in both was monarchical, the spirit and principles were almost republican. The sovereign was merely the chief of his nobility ; his power was circumscribed by that of the cortes, or parliament, composed of four distinct orders ;—the nobles of the first class, or *grandees* ; the nobles of the second class ; the representatives of towns and cities, and the deputies of

the clergy. By law the cortes was to be convoked once in two years, and once assembled, could not be dissolved by the king without its own consent ; all questions of peace and war, the collection of the revenues, the enacting and repealing of laws, and the redressing of all grievances in the state, depended on this assembly. When they pronounced the oath of allegiance to a new king, it was in these striking terms : “ We, who are each of us as good as you, and who are altogether more powerful than you, promise obedience to your government, if you maintain our rights and liberties ; but not otherwise.” It was a fundamental article in the constitution, that if the king should violate their privileges, the people might legally disclaim him as their sovereign, and elect another in his place—though that other should be *a heathen* ;—so ran the law.

This state of things had its disadvantages : the proud, warlike, turbulent Barons, stood between the King and the people ; braved the former and oppressed the latter, and by their mutual factions, and continual revolts against the throne, plunged the country into continual civil dissensions and sanguinary wars. The king held his power by so precarious a tenure, that he was continually in arms to defend it, either abroad or at home ; from the time when Pedro the Cruel and

Henry of Transtamare contended for the crown in 1369, to the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the history of Spain presents a confused picture of wars, popular insurrections, royal treasons, and domestic tragedies.

Yet, as in Italy, when the early Italian republics were contending within themselves and with each other, Spain, thus divided, and under the most unsettled government, was flourishing and populous : less powerful, perhaps, as a nation, and less formidable to neighbouring states, than it afterwards became when consolidated into one vast empire under a despotic monarch ; but inhabited by a brave, free, high-spirited, industrious people. Commerce and the arts, philosophy and the sciences, had flourished under the Moorish princes, and were extended to the Spaniards : they had a beautiful language, and a rich poetical literature. “ We have been accustomed,” says Mr. Lockhart, in his beautiful introduction to the Spanish Ballads, “ to consider the modern Spaniards as the most bigoted, and enslaved, and ignorant of Europeans ; but we must not forget that the Spaniards of three centuries back were in all respects a very different race of beings.” They had then less bigotry, were possessed of more civil liberty, a more elegant literature, and more refinement of manners than any nation of Europe.

Henry the Fourth of Castile, the eldest brother

of Isabella, was a weak and vicious prince: about ten years after his accession his misgovernment led to a general revolt, and the chief nobility, with Carillo, Archbishop of Toledo, at their head, resolved to exercise one of the undeniable privileges of their order, and degrade their unworthy monarch from his throne. They brought him to trial, and sentenced him, in effigy, in a manner the most extraordinary. On the 5th of June 1405, a solemn assembly of the states was convened at Avila; an immense amphitheatre was constructed in a plain without the city; in the midst was placed an ill-carved wooden image representing the king, it was seated on a throne, the diadem on its head, the sceptre in its hand, and the sword of justice girded to its side. In the midst of a solemn and breathless silence, the articles of accusation and condemnation were read aloud; at the conclusion of the first article the Archbishop of Toledo advanced to the statue and lifted the royal crown from its head; upon the reading of the second article, the Count of Placentia snatched away the sword of justice; at the third article, the Count of Benaventé tore the sceptre from its hand, and at the close of the last article, Don Diego de Zuniga hurled the image from the throne, and as it rolled in the dust, the whole assembly gave a shout of execration,—the next moment the young Alphonso, brother

to Henry, was raised to the vacant seat of power and proclaimed king; he was then about twelve years old. This sublime farce, or pantomime, or whatever else it may be called, had not the effects that it was expected to produce. Henry raised a large army, and opposed his brother's party; but a negotiation was set on foot, and the Marquis of Villena, who was at the head of the malcontents, proposed, as one article of reconciliation, the marriage of Isabella with his brother Pachéco. The feeble Henry consented, but Isabella, then about fifteen, resisted a union which she deemed degrading to her rank. She had also a personal dislike of the man proposed to her, and who, in spite of her open repugnance, persisted in pressing this marriage. The king, urged by Villena, was on the point of forcing his sister to the altar, when the sudden death of Pachéco released her from this hated alliance; and during the next two or three years, while her brothers, Henry and Alphonso, were carrying on a furious civil war, she remained in retirement, quietly and unconsciously preparing herself to grace the crown for which they were contending. At length the young Alphonso, whose spirit, bravery, and opening talents offered the fairest promise of happiness to the people, died, at the age of fifteen, and the party of

nobles opposed to Henry immediately resolved to place Isabella at their head. When their deputies waited on her with the offer of a crown, she replied, that "it was not theirs to bestow; and that while her elder brother Henry existed, nothing should induce her to assume a title which was his by the laws of God and man;" at the same time she claimed her right of succession, and the title of Princess of Asturias, which belonged to her as heiress to the throne. The chiefs were astonished and disconcerted by a reply which left them without an excuse for revolt. Having in vain endeavoured to overcome her scruples, they concluded a treaty with Henry, the most humiliating certainly that ever was extorted from a father and a king. By this treaty, he acknowledged his reputed daughter Joanna to be illegitimate; he consented to set aside her claims entirely, and declared Isabella his heiress and successor.

At such a price did this despicable monarch purchase for a few years longer the empty title of king, forfeiting, at the same time, all kingly attributes, as love, obedience, honour, power: being a husband, he had branded his own name with ignominy; and being a father, had disgraced and disinherited his unoffending child.

The next important object of the malcontent party was to select, from among many aspirants, a

fit consort for Isabella. The King of Portugal made overtures for himself; Louis XI. asked her in marriage for his brother, the Duc de Guienne; Edward IV. of England offered his brother, the Duke of Clarence, who was afterwards drowned in a butt of malmsey; and the King of Arragon asked her hand for his son Don Ferdinand. The latter was preferred by Isabella herself, as well as by all her party; but as it was the interest of her brother Henry to throw every possible impediment in the way of such a marriage, the Archbishop of Toledo carried Isabella privately to Valladolid, where Ferdinand met her in disguise, and the articles being previously prepared, and on principles the most favourable to Isabella and her future kingdom, Ferdinand subscribed to them at once, and received from the Archbishop the hand of the young princess.

At the period of her marriage (in 1469), Isabella had just entered her twentieth year. In her person "she was well formed, of the middle size, with great dignity and gracefulness of deportment, and a mingled gravity and sweetness of demeanour. Her complexion was fair; her hair auburn, inclining to red; her eyes were of a clear blue, with a benign expression, and there was a singular modesty in her countenance, gracing, as it did, a wonderful firmness of purpose and earnestness of

spirit." "She exceeded her husband in beauty, in personal dignity, in acuteness of genius, and grandeur of soul."* She combined a masculine energy and firmness of purpose with the utmost tenderness of heart, and a softness of temper and manner truly feminine. Her self-command was not allied to coldness, nor her prudence to dissimulation, and her generous and magnanimous spirit disdained all indirect measures, and all the little crooked arts of policy. While all her public thoughts and acts were princely and august, her private habits were simple, frugal, and unostentatious; without being learned, she was fond of literature, and being possessed of a fine understanding, had cultivated many branches of knowledge with success. She encouraged and patronised the arts, and was the soul of every undertaking which tended to promote the improvement and happiness of her subjects. Her only fault—most pardonable in her sex, her situation, and the age in which she lived—was, that her piety tended to bigotry, and placed her too much at the disposal of her priestly advisers. This led her into some errors, sad to think of, and fraught with evil consequences to her people; they are a subject of regret; they cannot be a subject of reproach to this glorious

* Life and Voyages of Columbus, vol. i. p. 105.

creature, who, in an age of superstition and ignorance, was sometimes mistaken and misled, but never perverted.

Ferdinand when he received the hand of Isabella, was a few months younger than his bride. "He was of the middle stature, well proportioned, hardy and active from athletic exercise; his carriage was free, erect, and majestic; he had an ample forehead, and hair of a bright chestnut-colour; his eyes were clear; his complexion rather florid, but scorched to a manly brown by the toils of war; his mouth was handsome and gracious in its expression; his voice sharp; his speech quick and fluent."* His courage was cool and undaunted, not impetuous; his temper close and unyielding, and his demeanour grave; his ambition was boundless, but it was also selfish, grasping, and unchecked by any scruple of principle, any impulse of generosity; he had great vigour of mind and great promptitude in action, but he never knew what it was to be impelled by a disinterested motive; and even his excessive bigotry (which afterwards obtained for him and his successors the title of "Most Catholic") was still made subservient to his selfish views and his insatiate thirst for dominion. Yet however repulsive his character may appear to us who can contemplate at one glance the events of his long reign,

* Life and Voyages of Columbus.

and see his subtle, perfidious policy, dissected and laid bare by the severe pen of history, he did not appear thus in the eyes of Isabella when they met at Valladolid. He was in the bloom of youth ; handsome, brave, accomplished, the vices of his character were yet undeveloped—his best qualities alone apparent. Animated by the wish to please, and, no doubt, pleased himself to find in the woman whom ambition had made his bride, all the charms and excellencies that could engage his attachment, we cannot wonder that Ferdinand at this time obtained and long fixed the tenderness and respect of his wife, whose disposition was in the highest degree confiding and affectionate.

Within a few days after the nuptial ceremony, Ferdinand and Isabella were obliged to separate ; the prince retired from Valladolid as privately as he had entered it, and during the next two or three years it appears from the course of events that they met seldom and at long intervals.

When Henry found that this dreaded marriage had been solemnized without his knowledge or consent, he was struck at once with rage and terror ; he revoked the treaty he had made in Isabella's favour, declared his daughter Joanna his only legal heir, and civil war again distracted and desolated the kingdom for more than three years. In 1474, Isabella proposed an interview with her brother, and they met at Segovia ; she

employed on this occasion all the eloquence, all the powers of persuasion she possessed as a woman, and all the ascendancy which her superior energy and spirit gave her over the feeble, vacillating mind of the king, to procure a reconciliation. When Henry appeared inclined to yield, and even went so far as to lead her palfrey as she rode through the streets of Segovia, Isabella sent for her husband, as if merely to pay his dutiful respects to his brother-in-law. They appeared in public together, entertained each other with seeming cordiality; and thus by her address Isabella led on her brother apparently to countenance those pretensions which he had himself denied. At the end of the same year the death of Henry opened a surer road to peace: he died of a fever in December 1474; his minister Villena had died a short time before, and Ferdinand and Isabella were, immediately, and almost without opposition, proclaimed King and Queen of Castile.

The Archbishop of Toledo, who had been so instrumental in placing Isabella on the throne, and the chief negotiator of her marriage, believed himself now at the summit of power, and expected every thing from the gratitude or the weakness of the young queen; he was very much surprised to find that the Cardinal Mendoza had at least an equal share of influence and favour, and that Isabella was not of a character to leave the go-

vernment in the hands of another. He was heard to say tauntingly, "that he would soon make Isabella lay down her sceptre and take up the distaff again;" but it was not so easy; and the ambitious archbishop, quitting the court in a fit of jealousy and disgust, threw himself into the party of Joanna, whose pretensions were supported by the young Marquis of Villena and other nobles. Alphonso King of Portugal also engaged in the cause of Joanna, upon condition that she should be contracted to him, although he was her uncle, (her mother's brother,) and more than twice her age. He accordingly invaded Castile with a powerful army, and Joanna was proclaimed queen at Placentia. But Ferdinand, who possessed consummate skill as a general, engaged the Portuguese at Toro, defeated them, and obliged Alphonso to retire to his own kingdom; the disaffected nobles submitted one after another to the power of Isabella, and Castile breathed at last from the horrors of civil war. As for the poor Princess Joanna, whose destiny it was to be disgraced and unfortunate through the vices of her parents, after being the affianced bride of several princes, who all one after another disclaimed her when she could no longer bring a crown for her dowry, she at last sought refuge in a convent, where she took the veil at the age of twenty, and died a nun.

Thus Isabella remained without a competitor, and was acknowledged as Queen of Castile and Leon; and three years after the battle of Toro, the death of his father raised Ferdinand to the throne of Arragon; the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon, were thenceforward united indissolubly, though still independent of each other. There arose at first some contest relative to the order of precedence; Castile and Leon had hitherto been allowed the precedence over Arragon in all political transactions; but Ferdinand now insisted that as king and husband, his titles should precede those of his wife.

It was a very delicate point of conjugal and state etiquette, and Isabella was placed in a difficult situation; she conducted herself, however, with that mixture of gentleness, prudence, and magnanimity which distinguished her character. She acknowledged, as a wife, the supremacy of Ferdinand, as her husband; in public and private, she yielded to him all the obedience, honour, and duty he could require, naming him on every occasion her lord, her master, her sovereign; but she would not concede one iota of the dignity of her kingdom. She maintained that the Queen of Castile should never yield the precedence to the King of Arragon; and in the end she overruled all opposition; it was decided that in all public acts, promulgated in their joint names, the titles of

Castile and Leon should precede those of Arragon and Sicily. Isabella managed this delicate affair with a firmness which endeared her to her Castilian nobles, who were haughtily jealous of the honour of their country; yet she upheld her rights with so much sweetness and feminine address, as to gain rather than lose in the affection of her husband; while her influence in his councils, and the respect of his ministers, were evidently increased by the resolution she had shown in maintaining what was considered a point of national honour.

In the same year that the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon were united, Queen Isabella lay-in at Toledo, and gave birth to her second daughter, the Infanta Joanna, afterwards the mother of Charles the Fifth.

The first great event of the reign of the two sovereigns was the war of Granada. Hostility against the Moors seems to have been the hereditary appanage of the crown of Castile, and it was one of the principal articles in Isabella's marriage treaty, that Ferdinand should lead the armies of the queen against the Infidels as soon as the affairs of the kingdom allowed him to do so. Isabella has always been represented as a principal adviser and instigator of this sanguinary war, and during its continuance the animating soul of all the daring

enterprises and deeds of arms achieved by others ; —and though the Spanish historians have added this to the rest of her merits, yet, disguise it as we will, there is something revolting to female nature in the idea of a woman thus interested and engaged in carrying on a war, not defensive, but offensive, and almost exterminating. We ought, therefore, in justice to Isabella, to look into the motives by which she was impelled ;—to consider the situation of the two countries at the time, the opinions and spirit of the age, and the deep-seated religious prejudices on both sides, which gave a tincture of fierce zeal to this great and terrible contest. It was bigotry on one side, opposed to fanaticism on the other. The Spaniards fought for honour, dominion, and the interests of the Church ; the Moors fought for their homes and hearths, their faith, their country, their very existence as a nation.

Isabella in undertaking this war (which had been in a measure transmitted to her with her crown) was certainly swayed by motives of which we can hardly estimate the full force, unless we transport ourselves in fancy back to the very times in which she lived. For seven hundred years the existence of a Moorish kingdom in the south of Spain had been like a thorn in the side of Christendom. Isabella deemed it a reproach that her fron-

tiers should be endangered, her power defied, by a people occupying a slip of land between her kingdom and the sea; and a sense of religion, sincere though pitiably mistaken, made her regard the conversion of the Moors as a necessary consequence of their subjection, and a war against them, even to extremity, as good and acceptable service to Heaven. On the other hand, the policy of Ferdinand in conducting this war, though cloaked under an appearance of religious zeal, was far more deep and selfish;—with him it was not only the desire of extending his dominions and increasing his revenues, but, in accordance with a deep-laid plan, to aggrandize the crown at the expense of the power of the nobility and the liberties of the people; a plan which he pursued through his whole reign with the most profound sagacity and the most unwearied perseverance; and he well knew that a popular war, which should place an immense army at his disposal, and exhaust the resources and the ardent spirit of the nobles in the general service, would be an effectual step to the object he had in view.

The kingdom of Granada extended along the south of Spain for about one hundred and eighty miles, and between the mountains and the sea its breadth was about seventy miles; yet this narrow space was filled with populous cities, enriched by

agriculture and commerce, defended by strong fortresses, and inhabited by a wealthy, warlike, industrious, and polished race of people. Nearly in the centre of the kingdom stood the royal city of Granada, on two lofty hills, the one crowned by the glorious palace of the Alhambra, within whose splendid courts forty thousand persons might have been lodged and entertained; the other by the citadel of Alcazaba. The sides of these hills and the valley between them were occupied by houses and palaces to the number of seventy thousand, and Granada alone could send forth from her gates twenty thousand fighting men. Around this noble city stretched the Vega, or plain of Granada, which resembled one vast and beautiful garden in the highest state of cultivation; there flourished the citron and the orange, the pomegranate and the fig-tree; there the olive poured forth its oil and the vine its purple juice. On one side a range of snowy mountains seemed to fence it from its hostile neighbours; on the other, the blue Mediterranean washed its shores, and poured into its harbours the treasures of Africa and the Levant. Nor were the inhabitants of this terrestrial Eden unmindful or unworthy of its glorious loveliness. They believed themselves peculiarly favoured by Heaven, in being placed in a spot of earth so enchanting, that they fancied the celestial Paradise

must be suspended immediately over it, and could alone exceed it in delights. Their patriotism had in it something romantic and tender, like the passion of a lover for his mistress; they clung to their beautiful country with a yearning affection; they poured their blood like water in its defence; they celebrated its charms, and lamented its desolation in those sweet and mournful ballads which are still extant, and which can yet draw tears from their Christian conquerors.

Long before the last invasion of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Moorish power had been on the decline; they had once possessed nearly the whole of the Peninsula from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Pyrenees; but had, by degrees, been driven southwards by the Christian powers, until they were circumscribed within the boundaries of Granada; even this they had held for some time as tributary to their enemies, paying annually two thousand pistoles of gold and sixteen hundred Christian captives, or Moorish slaves, to the sovereigns of Castile.

During the weak government of Henry the Fourth, and the civil wars which had distracted the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon, this tribute had fallen into disuse;—it had not been paid for several years: and while the Christian monarchs were weakened by internal and mutual

warfare, the Moors had been increasing in wealth and power, and had even extended their dominions by the addition of several tracts and towns lying on their frontiers. Their king, Muley Aben Hassan, was a tyrant in his family, and at this time distracted by domestic feuds: but he was a man of strong mind, with talents both for war and government; he had been distinguished in his youth for personal valour, and still retained in old age the fiery spirit and haughty bearing of his earlier years;—such, in few words, was the state of the two nations when the war began.

The first step taken by Ferdinand and Isabella, was to send a solemn embassy to the Moorish king, requiring the payment of the long arrears of tribute due to the monarchs of Castile. Aben Hassan received the ambassador in the state chamber of the Alhambra, and to the haughty requisition he replied as haughtily,—“Tell your sovereigns, that the kings of Granada, who were used to pay tribute in money to the Castilian crown, are dead. Our mint at present coins nothing but blades of cimeters and heads of lances.” The ambassador, Don Juan de Vera, probably longed to hurl back this proud defiance in the teeth of the infidels; but it was then no time to answer it in the same spirit. The contest with Portugal was still pending—the claims of Isabella to

her throne still undecided; it was not till 1481 that Ferdinand and Isabella, having signed a treaty with the King of Portugal, were enabled to turn their whole attention to the long meditated, long deferred war with Granada.

The Moorish king, aware of their intentions, and of the vast preparations making against him, was resolved to strike the first blow. He attacked Zahara, a celebrated fortress, perched on the summit of a mountain, and deemed so impregnable from its situation, as well as the strength of its defences, that a woman of severe and inaccessible chastity was proverbially called a *Zahareña*. In the dead of the night, Zahara was surprised by the Moors, the garrison massacred, and the rest of the inhabitants driven into captivity and sold as slaves. Although this inroad had only anticipated the intentions of Ferdinand and Isabella, and had given them a fair pretext for carrying the war into Granada, they affected the strongest indignation, and at their command all the chivalry of Castile flew to arms.

Among the nobles who first lifted their banners in this war, and afterwards became celebrated for their exploits, four were especially distinguished; Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz; Don Alonzo de Aguilar (the elder brother of Gonsalvo de Cordova); the

Count de Cabra ; and the Duke of Medina Sidonia. All these were in fact feudal sovereigns ; they were often engaged in petty wars with each other ; and there was not one of them who could not bring a small army of his own retainers into the field. The Marquis of Cadiz had immense possessions in Andalusia, including even populous cities and strong fortresses ; his near neighbourhood to the Moors, and frequent and mutual inroads, had kept up a constant feeling of hostility and hatred between them. This nobleman was the first to avenge the capture of Zahara ; and his measures were taken with equal celerity and secrecy. He assembled his friends and followers, made a descent on the territories of the enemy, and took by storm the strong town of Alhama, situated within a few leagues of the Moorish capital.

When the news of the capture of Alhama was brought to Granada, it filled the whole city with consternation ; the old men tore their garments, and scattered ashes on their heads ; the women rent their hair and ran about weeping and wailing ; with their children in their arms, they forced their way into the presence of the king, denouncing woe on his head, for having thus brought down the horrors of war on their happy and beautiful country. “ Accursed be the day,” they exclaimed, “ when the flame of war was kindled

by thee in our land ! May the holy Prophet bear witness before Allah, that we and our children are innocent of this act ! Upon thy head, and upon the heads of thy posterity to the end of the world, rest the sin of the destruction of Zahara !” *

Aben Hassan, unmoved by these feminine lamentations, assembled his army in all haste, and flew to the relief of Alhama ; he invested it with three thousand horse and fifty thousand foot, and Alhama would assuredly have been retaken by this overwhelming force, but for the courage and magnanimity of a woman.

When news was brought to the Marchioness of Cadiz, that her valiant husband was thus hard beset within the fortress of Alhama,—so that he must needs yield or perish, unless succour should be afforded him, and that speedily,—she sent immediately to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the most powerful of the neighbouring chiefs, requiring of him, as a Christian knight and a gentleman, to fly to the assistance of the Marquis. Now, between the family of the Duke and that of the Marquis of Cadiz there was an hereditary feud, which had

* The lament of the Moors on the loss of Alhama is perpetuated in the little Spanish ballad so happily and so faithfully translated by Lord Byron—

“ The Moorish king rides up and down
Through Granada’s royal town, &c.”

lasted more than a century, and they were moreover personal enemies; yet, in that fine spirit of courtesy and generosity which mingled with the ferocity and ignorance of those times, the aid demanded with such magnanimous confidence by the high-hearted wife of De Leon, was as nobly and as frankly granted by the Duke of Medina Sidonia. Without a moment's hesitation he called together his followers and his friends, and such was his power and resources, that five thousand horse and fifty thousand foot assembled round his banner at Seville. With this numerous and splendid army he hastened to the relief of Alhama ere it should be overwhelmed by the enemy. In fact, the small but gallant band which still held its walls against the fierce attacks of the Moor, were now reduced to the last extremity, and must in a few days have capitulated.

Ferdinand and Isabella were at Medina del Campo, when tidings successively arrived of the capture of Alhama, of the terrible situation of the Marquis of Cadiz, and the generous expedition of Medina Sidonia. The king, when he heard of this vast armament, and the glory to be acquired by the relief of Alhama, sent forward couriers to the Duke with orders to await his coming, that he might himself take the command of the forces; and then, with a few attendants,

he spurred towards the scene of action, leaving the queen to follow.

But the Duke of Medina Sidonia was not inclined to share with another—not even with his sovereign—the glory of an expedition undertaken from such motives and at his own care and cost: moreover, every hour of delay was of the utmost consequence, and threatened the safety of the besieged; instead, therefore, of attending to the commands of the king, or awaiting his arrival, the army of Medina Sidonia pressed forwards to Alhama. On the approach of the Duke, Aben Hassan, who had already lost a vast number of his troops through the gallant defence of the besieged, saw that all farther efforts were in vain. Gnashing his teeth, and tearing up his beard by the roots, with choler and disappointment, he retired to his city of Granada. Meantime the Marquis of Cadiz and his brave and generous deliverer met and embraced before the walls of Alhama; the Duke of Medina Sidonia refused for himself and his followers any share in the rich spoils of the city, and from that time forth these noble cavaliers, laying aside their hereditary animosity, became firm and faithful friends.

These were the feats which distinguished the opening of the war; they have been extracted at some length, as illustrating the spirit and manners

of the age, and the character of this memorable contest; the other events of the war, except as far as Isabella was personally concerned, must be passed over more rapidly. She had followed the king from Medina del Campo, and arrived at Cordova just as the council was deliberating what was to be done with the fortress of Alhama. Many were of opinion that it was better to demolish it at once than to maintain it with so much danger and cost in the midst of the enemy's territory. "What!" exclaimed Isabella, indignant that so much blood and valour should have been expended in vain, "what, then, shall we destroy the first fruits of our victories? shall we abandon the first place we have wrested from the Moors? Never let us suffer such an idea to occupy our minds, it would give new courage to the enemy, arguing fear or feebleness in our councils. You talk of the toil and expense of maintaining Alhama;—did we doubt on undertaking this war that it was to be a war of infinite cost, labour, and bloodshed? and shall we shrink from the cost the moment a victory is obtained, and the question is merely to guard or abandon its glorious trophy? Let us hear no more of the destruction of Alhama; let us maintain its walls sacred as a strong hold granted us by Heaven in the centre of this hostile land, and let our only

consideration be, how to extend our conquest, and capture the surrounding cities." * This spirited advice was applauded by all: the city of Alhama was strongly garrisoned, and maintained thenceforward in despite of the Moors.

From this time we find Isabella present at every succeeding campaign, animating her husband and his generals by her courage and undaunted perseverance; providing for the support of the armies by her forethought and economy; comforting them under their reverses by her sweet and gracious speeches, and pious confidence in Heaven; and by her active humanity, and her benevolent sympathy, extended to friend and foe, softening, as far as possible, the horrors and miseries of war. Isabella was the first who instituted regular military surgeons to attend the movements of the army, and be at hand on the field of battle. These surgeons were paid out of her own revenues; and she also provided six spacious tents, furnished with beds and all things requisite, for the sick and wounded, which were called the "Queen's hospital."

Thus to the compassionate heart of a woman, directed by energy and judgment, the civilized world was first indebted for an expedient, which has since saved so many lives, and done so much

* Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada, vol. i. p. 81.

towards alleviating the most frightful evils of war.

It were long to tell of all the battles and encounters, the skirmishes and the forays, the fierce mutual inroads for massacre or plunder, which took place before the Crescent was finally plucked down, and the Cross reared in its stead; or to describe the valorous sieges and obstinate defences of the fortresses of Ronda, Zalea, Moclin, and Baza; nor how often the banks of the Xenil were stained with blood, while down its silver current

“ Chiefs confused in mutual slaughter,
Moor and Christian, rolled along !”

The Castilian sovereigns, great as were their power and resources, had to endure some signal reverses; the most memorable of which was the disgraceful repulse of Ferdinand before the walls of Loxa in 1482; and the terrible defeat of the Christians in the passes of the mountains of Malaga, which occurred in 1483. On that disastrous day, which is still remembered in the songs of Andalusia, three of the most celebrated commanders of Castile, with the pride of her chivalry, were encountered by a determined band of Moorish peasantry; all the brothers of the Marquis of Cadiz perished at his side; the Master of Santiago

fled; the royal standard-bearer was taken prisoner; and the Marquis of Cadiz, and his friend Don Alonzo de Aguilar, escaped with difficulty, and wounded almost to death. In truth, the Moors made a glorious stand for their national honour and independence; and had it not been for their own internal divisions and distracted councils, which gave them over a prey to their conquerors, their subjection, which cost such a lavish expenditure of blood, and toil, and treasure, had been more dearly purchased,—perhaps the issue had been altogether different.

The feuds between the Zegrís and the Abencerages, and the domestic cruelties of Aben Hassan, had rendered Granada a scene of tumult and horror, and stained the halls of the Alhambra with blood. Boabdil, the eldest son of Aben Hassan, (called by the Spanish historians “*el Rey Chiquito*,” or “*el Chico*,” the little King,) had rebelled against his father, or rather had been forced into rebellion by the tyranny of the latter; the old monarch was driven from the city of Granada, and took up his residence at Malaga, while Boabdil reigned in the Alhambra. The character of Boabdil was the reverse of that of his ferocious sire; he was personally brave, generous, magnificent, and humane; but indolent, vacillating in temper, and strongly and fatally influenced

by an old tradition or prophecy, which foretold that he would be the last king of his race, and that he was destined to witness the destruction of the Moorish power in Spain. Roused, however, by the remonstrances of his heroic mother, the Sultana Ayxa, Boabdil resolved to signalize his reign by some daring exploit against the Christians. He assembled a gallant army, and led them to invade the Castilian territory. In the plains of Lucena he was met by the Count de Cabra, who, after a long-contested and sanguinary battle, defeated and dispersed his troops. Boabdil himself, distinguished above the rest, not less by his daring valour than by his golden armour and his turban that blazed with jewels, was taken prisoner, and carried by the Count de Cabra to his castle of Vaena.

The mother of Boabdil, the Sultana Ayxa, and his young and beautiful wife Morayma, had daily watched from the loftiest tower of the Alhambra to see his banners returning in triumph through the gate of Elvira; a few cavaliers, fugitives from the battle of Lucena, and covered with dust and blood, came spurring across the Vega, with the news of his defeat and capture—and who can speak the sorrow of the wife and the mother? Isabella herself, when the tidings of this great victory were brought to her, wept in the midst of her exulta-

tion for the fate of the Moorish prince. She sent him a message full of courtesy and kindness, and when the council met to consider whether it would be advisable to deliver Boabdil into the hands of his cruel father, who had offered large terms to get him into his power, Isabella rejected such barbarous policy with horror. By her advice and influence, Boabdil was liberated and restored to his kingdom, on conditions which, considering all the circumstances, might be accounted favourable: it was stipulated that he should acknowledge himself the vassal of the Castilian crown; pay an annual tribute, and release from slavery four hundred Christian captives, who had long languished in chains; and that he should leave his only son and the sons of several nobles of his family as hostages for his faith. Having subscribed to these conditions, Boabdil was received by Ferdinand and Isabella at Cordova, embraced as a friend, and restored to his kingdom, with gifts and princely honours.

In liberating Boabdil, the politic Ferdinand was impelled by motives far different from those which actuated his generous queen. He wisely calculated that the release of the Moorish prince would prove far more advantageous than his detention, by prolonging the civil discords of the kingdom of Granada, and dividing its forces. The

event showed he had not been mistaken. No sooner was Boabdil restored to freedom, than the wrath of the fiery old king, Aben Hassan, again turned upon his son, and the most furious contests raged between the two parties.

This was the miserable and distracted state of Granada, while King Ferdinand continued to push his conquests, taking first one city or castle, then another; ravaging the luxuriant Vega, and carrying away the inhabitants into captivity: while Boabdil, bound by the treaty into which he had entered, wept to behold his beautiful country desolated with fire and sword, and dared not raise his arm to defend it. In the midst of these troubles, old Aben Hassan becoming blind and infirm, was deposed by his brother Abdalla el Zagal, who proclaimed himself king; and, denouncing his nephew Boabdil as an ally of the Christians and a traitor to his faith and country, he prepared to carry on the war with vigour. The military skill of El Zagal was equal to his ferocity, and the Christians found in him a determined and formidable opponent.

The fortress of Ronda, in the Serrania, which had long been considered impregnable from its strength and situation, was taken from the Moors in 1485, after a long and fierce resistance. The isolated rock on which this strong hold was perch-

ed, like the aëry of the vulture, was hollowed into dungeons, deep and dark, in which were a vast number of Christian captives, who had been taken in the Moorish forays. It is recorded, that among them were several young men of high rank, who had surrendered themselves as slaves in lieu of their parents, not being able to pay the ransom demanded : and many had pined for years in these receptacles of misery. Being released from their fetters, they were all collected together, and sent to the Queen at Cordova. When Isabella beheld them, she melted into tears ; she ordered them to be provided with clothes and money, and all other necessaries, and conveyed to their respective homes ; while the chains they had worn were solemnly suspended in the church of St. John at Toledo, in sign of thanksgiving to Heaven. This was the spirit in which Isabella triumphed in success :—an instance of the gentle and magnanimous temper with which she could sustain a reverse occurred soon afterwards.

A short time after the siege of Ronda, Isabella took up her residence at Vaena, a strong castle on the frontiers of Andalusia, belonging to the renowned and valiant Count de Cabra, the same who had won the battle of Lucena and taken Boabdil prisoner. The influence which Isabella exercised over her warlike nobles, was not

merely that of a queen, but that of a beautiful and virtuous woman, whose praise was honour, and whose smiles were cheaply purchased by their blood. The Count de Cabra, while he entertained his royal and adored mistress within his castle walls, burned to distinguish himself by some doughty deed of arms, which should win him grace and favour in her eyes. The Moor El Zagal was encamped near Moclin; to capture another king, to bring him in chains to the feet of his mistress—what a glorious exploit for a Christian knight and a devoted cavalier! The ardent Count beheld only the hoped success, he overlooked the dangers of the undertaking. With a handful of followers, he attacked the fierce El Zagal; was defeated;—and himself and his retainers driven back upon Vaena, with “rout and confusion following at their heels.”

Isabella waited the issue of this expedition within the walls of the castle. She was seated in the balcony of a lofty tower, overlooking the vale beneath, and at her side were her daughter Isabella and her infant son Don Juan. Her chief minister and counsellor, the venerable Cardinal Mendoza, stood near her; they looked along the mountain road which led towards Moclin, and beheld couriers spurring their steeds through the defiles with

furious haste, and galloping into the town ; and in the same moment the shrieks and wailings which rose from below, informed Isabella of the nature of their tidings ere they were summoned to her presence. For a moment her tenderness of heart prevailed over her courage and fortitude ; the loss of so many devoted friends, the defeat of one of her bravest knights, the advantage and triumph gained by the enemy almost in her presence, and the heart-rending lamentations of those who had lost sons, brothers, lovers, husbands, in this disastrous battle, almost overwhelmed her. But when some of the courtiers present endeavoured to comfort her by laying the blame on the rashness of De Cabra, and would have lessened him in her opinion, she was roused to generous indignation ; “ The enterprise,” she said, “ was rash, but not more rash than that of Lucena, which had been crowned with success, and which all had applauded as the height of heroism. Had the Count de Cabra succeeded in capturing the uncle, as he did the nephew, who would not have praised him to the skies ?”

The successful enterprise of the Christians against Zalea concluded the eventful campaign of 1485. Isabella retired from the seat of war to Alcada de Henares, where, in the month of De-

cember, she gave birth to her third daughter, the Infanta Catherine of Arragon, afterwards the wife of Henry the Eighth of England.

The next year, 1486, was one of the most memorable during the war. Early in the spring, Isabella and her husband repaired to Cordova, and a gallant and splendid array of the feudal chieftains of Castile assembled round them. That ancient city, with all the fair valley along the banks of the Guadalquivir, resounded with warlike preparation; the waving of banners, the glancing of spears, the flashing of armour, the braying of trumpets, the neighing of steeds, the gorgeous accoutrements of the knights and their retainers, must have formed a moving scene of surpassing interest and magnificence. There was the brave Marquis of Cadiz, justly styled the mirror of Andalusian chivalry. When the women who were obliged to attend Queen Isabella to the wars, and who possessed not her noble contempt of danger, beheld the Marquis of Cadiz, they rejoiced, and felt secure under the protection of one so renowned for his courtesy to their sex, and of whom it was said, that no injured woman had ever applied to him in vain for redress. There was the valiant Count de Cabra, who had captured Boabdil; and the famous Don Alonzo de Aguilar, renowned for his deeds of arms in history and in song; and there was his brother Gonsalvo de

Cordova, then captain of Isabella's guards. There was the young Duke of Infantado, with his five hundred followers, all glittering in silken vests and scarfs, and armour inlaid with silver and gold; and the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and the Duke of Medina Celi, names at once so harmonious in their sound, and so chivalrous in their associations, that they dwell upon the ear like the prolonged note of a silver clarion. Besides these, were many worthy cavaliers of England, France, and Germany, who were induced partly by the fame of this holy expedition, (such it was then deemed,) partly by the wish to distinguish themselves in the sight of a beautiful and gracious queen, to join the banners of Isabella and Ferdinand, at Cordova. The most conspicuous of these foreign auxiliaries was Lord Rivers of England, a near relation of Elizabeth of York, and the son of that accomplished Lord Rivers who was beheaded at Pomfret. After the battle of Bosworth-field, he joined the camp of the Catholic sovereigns with three hundred retainers, and astonished the Spaniards by the magnificence of his appointments, his courtesy, his valour, and the ponderous strength and determined courage of his men. There was also the accomplished French knight Gaston de Léon of Toulouse, with a band of followers all gallant and gay, "all plumed like ostriches that

wing the wind," and ready alike for the dance or the *melée*;—for lady's bower or battle-field:—and many more.

The presence of Isabella and her court lent to this martial pomp an added grace, dignity, and interest; she was surrounded by many ladies of noble birth and distinguished beauty, the wives or mothers or sisters of the brave men who were engaged in the war. The most remarkable were, the Infanta Isabella, at this time about fourteen, and who, as she grew in years, became the inseparable companion and bosom friend of her mother; the high-minded Marchioness of Cadiz, and the Marchioness of Moya, both honoured by the queen's intimacy, and the latter eminent for her talents as well as her virtues. A number of ecclesiastics of high rank and influence also attended on Isabella. The grand Cardinal, Gonsalez de Mendoza, was always at her side, and was at this time and during his life her chief minister and adviser; he is described as "a man of a clear understanding, eloquent, judicious, and of great quickness and capacity in business, simple yet nice in his apparel, lofty and venerable in his deportment." He was an elegant scholar, but of course imbued with all the prejudices of his age and calling; and notwithstanding his clerical profession, he had a noble

band of warriors in his pay. There were also the Pope's Nuncio, the Prior of Prado, the warlike Bishop of Jaen, and many others.

Amid this assemblage of haughty nobles and fierce soldiers, men who knew no arts but those of war, and courted no glory which was not sown and reaped in blood,—amid all these high-born dames and proud and stately prelates,—moved one in lowly garb and peaceful guise, overlooked, unheeded, when not repulsed with scorn by the great, or abandoned to the derision of the vulgar, yet bearing on his serene brow the stamp of greatness ;—one before whose enduring and universal fame the transient glory of these fighting warriors faded away, like tapers in the blaze of a noontide sun ; and compared with whose sublime achievements their loftiest deeds were mere infant's play :—This was the man—

“ By Heaven design'd
To lift the veil that cover'd half mankind.”—

Columbus !—he first appeared as a suitor in the court of Castile in the spring of the year 1486. In the midst of the hurry and tumult of martial preparation, and all the vicissitudes and pressing exigencies of a tremendous and expensive war, we can hardly wonder if his magnificent but (as they then appeared) extravagant speculations

should at first meet with little attention or encouragement. During the spring and autumn of this year he remained at Cordova, but though warmly patronised by the Cardinal Mendoza, he could not obtain an audience of the sovereigns.

Nor was Isabella to blame in this: it appears that while Ferdinand proceeded to lay siege to Loxa, the queen was wholly engrossed by the care of supplying the armies, the administration of the revenues, and all the multiplied anxieties of foreign and domestic government, which in the absence of Ferdinand devolved solely upon her. She gave her attention unremittingly to these complicated affairs, sparing neither time nor fatigue; and conducted all things with consummate judgment, as well as the most astonishing order and activity. It is not surprising that under such circumstances Columbus, then an obscure individual, should have found it difficult to obtain an audience; or that his splendid views, as yet unrealised, should have appeared, amid the immediate cares and interests and dangers pressing around her, somewhat remote and visionary, and fail to seize on her instant attention.

In the mean time the war proceeded; Loxa was taken after an obstinate defence, and a terrible slaughter of the miserable inhabitants. Boabdil,

“ the Unlucky,” was retaken at Loxa, but released again, on renewing his oath of vassalage, to foment the troubles of his wretched country.*

After the capture of Loxa, Ferdinand wrote to Isabella requesting her presence in his camp, that he might consult with her on the treatment of Boabdil, and the administration of their new dominions.

In ready obedience to her husband’s wish, Isabella took her departure from the city of Cordova on the 12th of June. She was accompanied by her favourite daughter the Princess Isabella, and a numerous train of noble ladies and valiant cavaliers, with courtiers, statesmen, and prelates of rank. On the frontiers of Granada she was met by the Marquis of Cadiz, who, with a gallant company of knights and retainers, had come to escort her through the lately-conquered territories to the camp, which was now removed to Moclin,

* In one of the suburbs of Loxa, a poor weaver was at his work during the hottest of the assault; his wife urged him to fly: “ Why should I fly?” said the Moor, “ to be rescued for hunger and slavery? I tell you, wife, I will abide here; for better is it to die quickly by the steel, than to perish piecemeal in chains and dungeons.” Having said this he coolly resumed his work, and was slain at his loom by the furious assailants. Vide Conquest of Granada.—This reminds us of Archimedes, only that the Moorish weaver was the greater philosopher of the two, and did not stick to his loom through mere absence of mind.

another formidable place of strength, which Ferdinand had invested with his whole army. On her journey thither Isabella made a short stay at Loxa, where she and the young Infanta visited the sick and wounded soldiers, distributing among them money and raiment, and medical aid, according to their need. Thence Isabella proceeded through the mountain roads towards Moclin, still respectfully escorted by the brave Marquis of Cadiz, who attended at her bridle-rein, and was treated by her with all the distinction due to so valiant and courteous a knight. When she approached the camp, the young Duke del Infantado, with all his retainers in their usual gorgeous array, met her at the distance of several miles; and when they came in view of the tents, the king rode forth to receive her, at the head of the grandees, and attended by all the chivalry of his army, glittering in their coats of mail and embroidered vests, with waving plumes, and standards and pennons floating in the summer air. "The queen," says the Chronicle, "was mounted on a chesnut mule, in a saddle-chair of state; the housings were of fine crimson cloth embroidered with gold; the reins and head-piece were of satin, curiously wrought with needle-work. The queen wore a skirt of velvet over petticoats of brocade; a scarlet mantle hung from her shoulders, and her hat was of black

velvet embroidered with gold." The dress of the young infanta was all of black, and a black mantilla, ornamented in the Moorish fashion, hung on her shoulders: the ladies of the court, all richly dressed, followed on forty mules. The meeting between Ferdinand and Isabella, on this occasion, was arranged with true Spanish gravity and etiquette. Laying their conjugal character aside for the present, they approached each other as sovereigns; each alighting at some paces' distance, made three profound reverences before they embraced. The queen, it is remarked, took off her embroidered hat, and remained with her head uncovered, except by a silken net which confined her hair. Ferdinand then kissed her respectfully on the cheek, and, turning to his daughter, he took her in his arms, gave her a father's blessing, and kissed her on the lips. They then remounted, and the splendid procession moved onwards to the camp, the Earl of Rivers riding next to the king and queen.

Isabella and her daughter were present during the whole of the siege of Moclin, which was reduced with great difficulty, and principally through the skill of the Lombard engineers. It appears that in the use of all fire-arms the Spaniards greatly excelled the Moors; and in the sciences of fortification and gunnery, which were still in their

infancy, the Italians at this time exceeded all Europe. Moclin fell before the Spanish batteries, and the inhabitants capitulated; and Isabella and her husband entered the city in solemn state with their band of warriors. They were preceded by the standard of the Cross, and a company of priests, with the choir of the royal chapel, chanting the *Te Deum*: as they moved thus in solemn procession through the smoking and deserted streets of the fallen city, they suddenly heard a number of voices, as if from under the earth, responding to the chorus of priests, and singing aloud, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." There was a pause of astonishment, and it was discovered that these were the voices of certain Christian captives who had been confined in the subterraneous dungeons of the fortress. Isabella, overcome with a variety of emotions, wept, and commanded that these captives should be instantly brought before her; she then ordered them to be clothed and comforted, and conveyed in safety to their several homes.

The Queen remained for some weeks at Moclin, healing, as far as she was able, the calamities of war; introducing regular government and good order into her new dominions; converting mosques into churches and convents, and founding colleges for the instruction and conversion of the

Moors. It should not be omitted, that with all her zeal for religion, Isabella uniformly opposed herself to all measures of persecution or severity; the oppression and cruelty afterwards exercised towards the conquered Moors, did not originate with her; but, on the contrary, were most abhorrent to her benign temper, and her natural sense of justice. She was ever their advocate and protectress, even while she lent all the energies of her mind to the prosecution of the national and religious war she waged against them. Hence, she was hardly more beloved and revered by her Catholic, than by her Moslem subjects.

Ferdinand, meantime, marched forward and ravaged the Vega, even to the very gates of Granada. He then returned to join the queen at Moclin; and, at the conclusion of this triumphant campaign, the two sovereigns retired to the city of Cordova, leaving young Frederick de Toledo, (already distinguished for his military talents, and afterwards the Duke of Alva of terrible memory,) to command upon the frontiers of their new conquests.

From Cordova Isabella removed to Salamanca, where the plans and proposals of Columbus were for the first time laid before a council appointed to consider them. When we read in history of the absurd reasoning, the narrow-minded objec-

tions, the superstitious scruples, which grave statesmen and learned doctors opposed to the philosophical arguments and enthusiastic eloquence of Columbus, we cannot wonder that Isabella herself should doubt and hesitate. Her venerable minister, the Cardinal Mendoza, favoured Columbus, but her confessor, Ferdinand de Talavera, was decidedly inimical to all plans of discovery, and by his private influence over the queen, he was enabled to throw a thousand impediments in the way of the great navigator, and defer his access to Isabella.

The winter passed away before the council at Salamanca came to any decision. Early in the spring of 1487, King Ferdinand took the field, with 20,000 cavalry, and 50,000 foot; while Isabella remained at Cordova, to preside as usual over the affairs of government, and make arrangements for conveying to this vast army the necessary and regular supplies. It was the design of Ferdinand to attack Malaga, the principal seaport of Granada, and the second city of the kingdom, and thus cut off any succours that might be expected from the Mahometan states of Africa. It was necessary to reduce several strong places before the army could invest the city of Malaga, and among others, Velez Malaga. Before this last-mentioned town, the king exhibit-



ed a trait of personal valour which had nearly proved fatal to him. The camp being endangered by a sudden attack of the Moors, he rushed into the battle, armed only with his lance; his equerry was slain at his side, and Ferdinand instantly transfixing with his spear the Moor who had killed his attendant. He was thus left without a weapon, surrounded by the enemy, and had not the Marquis of Cadiz and others of his nobles galloped to his rescue, he must have perished. On his return to the camp in safety, he made a vow to the Virgin, never again to enter the battle without his sword girded to his side.

When Isabella was informed of this incident, she was greatly agitated: the gallantry and danger of her husband appear to have left a strong impression on her imagination, for long afterwards she granted to the inhabitants of Velez Malaga, as the arms of their city, an escutcheon, representing the figure of the king on horseback, with the equerry dead at his feet, and the Moors flying before him.

In the beginning of May, Ferdinand undertook the memorable siege of Malaga, which lasted more than three months. The city was strongly fortified, and, contrary to the wishes of the opulent and peaceful merchants, was most obstinately defended by Hamet el Zegri, a valiant old Moor,



who had the command of the garrison. To him, the horrible sufferings inflicted on the inhabitants by a protracted siege, appeared quite unworthy the consideration of a soldier, whose duty it was to defend the fortress entrusted to him. The difficulties, dangers, and delays which attended this siege, so dispirited the Spaniards, that many thought of abandoning it altogether. A report that such was the intention of the sovereigns was circulated among the Christians and the Moors, and gave fresh courage to the latter. To disprove it in the sight of both nations, Queen Isabella, attended by her daughter, and the whole retinue of her court, arrived to take up her residence in the camp.

Isabella was received by her army with shouts of exultation. Immediately on her arrival, she gave a proof of the benignity of her disposition, by entreating that the attacks on the city might be discontinued, and offers of peace sent in her name to the besieged: the firing accordingly ceased for that day, and gladly would the inhabitants of Malaga have accepted her overtures; but the fierce Hamet el Zegri disdainfully rejected them, and even threatened with death the first person who should propose to capitulate.

The Marquis of Cadiz invited the queen and the infanta to a banquet in his tent, which crowned

with its floating banners and silken draperies the summit of a lofty hill, opposite to the citadel of Malaga. While he was pointing out to Isabella the various arrangements of the royal camp, which, filled with warlike tumult the valley at their feet : while he was explaining the operations of the siege, the strong defences of the city, and the effects of the tremendous ordnance, he suddenly beheld from one of the enemy's towers his own family banner hung out in scorn and defiance ; it was the same which had been captured by the Moors, in the terrible defeat among the mountains, in 1483. Whatever the Marquis might have felt at this insult offered to him in the presence of his queen and the noblest ladies of her court, he suppressed his indignation : while his kinsmen and followers breathed deep vows of revenge, he alone maintained a grave silence, and seemed unmindful of the insolent taunt ; but within a few days afterwards, the tower from which his banner had been displayed in mockery, lay a heap of ruins.

While Isabella remained in the camp before Malaga, her life, which her virtues had rendered dear and valuable to her people, had nearly been brought to a tragical close. A Moorish fanatic named Agerbi, who had among his own people the reputation of a Santon, or holy prophet, undertook to deliver his country from its enemies. He

found means to introduce himself into the Christian camp, where his wild and mysterious appearance excited equal astonishment and curiosity; he pretended to the gift of prophecy, and required to be conducted to the king and queen, to whom he promised to reveal the event of the siege, and other secrets of importance. By command of the Marquis of Cadiz, he was conducted to the royal tents. It happened, fortunately, that the king was then asleep; the queen, though impatient and curious to behold this extraordinary prophet, of whom her attendants had made such a wonderful report, yet, with her usual delicacy towards her husband, refused to receive the Moor, or listen to his communications, until the king should wake; he was therefore conducted into a tent, in which the Marchioness of Moya and Don Alvaro of Portugal were playing at chess; a few attendants were standing round. From the dress and high bearing of these personages, and the magnificent decorations of the pavilion, the Moorish Santon believed himself in presence of the king and queen, and while they were gazing on him with wonder and curiosity, he drew a cimeter from beneath his robe, struck Don Alvaro to the earth, and turning on the marchioness, aimed a blow at her head, which had been fatal, if the point of his weapon had not caught in the hang-

ings of the tent, and thus arrested its force, so that it lighted harmless on the golden ornaments in her hair. This passed like lightning; in the next moment the assassin was flung to the earth by a friar and the queen's treasurer, and instantly massacred by the guards, who rushed in upon hearing the deadly struggle. The soldiers, in a paroxysm of indignation, seized on his body, and threw it into the city from one of their military engines. Don Alvaro recovered from his wound, and an additional guard, composed of twelve hundred cavaliers of rank, was stationed round the royal tents. Isabella, though struck at first with consternation and horror at this treacherous attempt on her life, was still anxious to spare the miserable inhabitants of Malaga. By her advice, terms of capitulation were again offered to the city, but in vain; Hamet el Zegri, encouraged by a certain Moorish necromancer whom he entertained in his household, and who fed him with false hopes and predictions, again rejected her overtures with contempt.

It appears, that among those who joined the court of Isabella before Malaga, was Columbus, whose expenses on this occasion were defrayed from the royal treasury.* But amid the clash and din of arms, and the dangers and anxieties of the siege,—the murderous sallies and fierce assaults,

* Vide *Life and Voyages of Columbus*.

only relieved now and then by solemn religious festivals, or by the princely banquets given by the various commanders at their respective quarters, there was no time to bestow on the consideration of plans for the discovery of distant worlds : the issue of a long and terrible war hung upon the event of an hour, and the present crisis engrossed the thoughts of all.

In the mean time the siege continued ; famine raged within the city, and the people, seized with despair, were no longer restrained by the threats or the power of Hamet el Zegri ; they pursued him with curses and lamentations as he rode through the streets ; mothers threw down their starving infants before his horses—" Better," they exclaimed, " that thou shouldst trample them to death at once, than that we should behold them perish by inches, and listen to their famished cries." Hamet, unable to stem the tide of popular fury, withdrew into the fortress of the citadel, called the Gibralfaro, and abandoned the town and its inhabitants to their fate ; they immediately surrendered at discretion, and were forced to ransom themselves from slavery, on hard and cruel terms, which very few were able to fulfil. The fortress yielded soon afterwards ; Hamet el Zegri was thrown into a dungeon, and the garrison sold into slavery. Sixteen hundred Christian captives

were found in the city of Malaga ; they were sent to Queen Isabella, as the most acceptable trophy of her success : and yet the same Isabella, who received these poor people with compassionate tenderness,—who took off their fetters with her own hands, relieved their wants, and restored them to their families and homes ;—the same Isabella sent fifty beautiful Moorish girls as a present to the Queen of Naples ; thirty to the Queen of Portugal ; and others she reserved for herself and for the favourite ladies of her household. It also appears that, eventually, all the inhabitants of Malaga, with few exceptions, to the number of sixteen thousand men, women, and children, were stripped of their possessions, by the heartless policy of Ferdinand, and condemned to slavery. We may infer from the general conduct and character of Isabella, that she either could not prevent this cruel retaliation, or was impressed by her religious directors with the idea that it was right and just. As for the measures afterwards taken for the conversion of this unhappy people, she was uniformly opposed to them. She long resisted the establishment of the Inquisition ; but, as the historian of Columbus observes, “ her scruples, unfortunately for Spain, were slowly vanquished by the churchmen about her.” When that execrable tribunal commenced its persecutions

against the Moorish and Jewish converts, her merciful interposition frequently checked its cruelties, and exposed her to the censure of the priesthood. When, contrary to her own sweet nature and upright judgment, she yielded to those in whose wisdom she confided, she erred in her humility and her ignorance; and the effort, the sacrifice it cost her gentle disposition, converted her error almost into a virtue. The sin and the shame rest upon those, who, from interested motives, or in perverse blindness, deceived and misled her! It was far different with her *most Catholic* husband, who made his bigotry the excuse for his ambition, and his persecuting zeal the cloak of his detestable rapacity.

In the following year, (1488,) Ferdinand led his army to attack the Moors on the eastern side of Granada: this campaign was short, and by no means successful, owing to the military prowess of El Zagal, who ruled in these provinces. Isabella spent the ensuing winter at Saragoza and Valladolid, occupied in the domestic affairs of her kingdom, and in the education of her children. Voltaire asserts, that Isabella and her husband "neither loved nor hated each other, and that they lived together less as husband and wife, than as allied and independent sovereigns:" but on a closer examination of their history, this does not appear to be true. Isabella's marriage had been a union

of inclination as well as of policy. In her youth, she had both loved and admired her husband ; as his cold and selfish character disclosed itself, she may possibly have felt her esteem and affection decline ; and it is remarked by Voltaire himself, that she deeply suffered as a woman and a wife, not only from her husband's coldness, but from his frequent infidelities. Yet, if they had private disagreements, they were never betrayed to the prying eyes of the courtiers ; in this respect she maintained her own dignity and his, with admirable self-command. She found consolation for her domestic sorrows in the society of her eldest daughter, the Infanta Isabella, and in the excellent qualities of her son Don Juan. Her second daughter, Joanna, had been from her infancy subject to fits, which, in the course of years, disordered her intellect ; her youngest daughter, Catherine, who has obtained a mournful celebrity in history as Catherine of Arragon, was about this time demanded in marriage by Henry VII. of England for his son Prince Arthur. This infant marriage sealed a commercial and political treaty between the two countries, which remained unbroken till the time of Philip II. and Queen Elizabeth.

The year 1489 was rendered memorable by the siege of Baza, a fortress situated on the eastern confines of Granada. On the reduction of this

place depended the event of the war, and the king invested it with an army of twenty-five thousand men. While he was before the place, displaying his military skill, and leading on his gallant chivalry, a far more difficult task devolved on Queen Isabella; she had to attend to the affairs of government, and at the same time to provide all things for supplying a large army, enclosed in the enemy's country, and to which there was no access but over difficult mountain roads and dangerous passes: the incredible expenses and difficulties she met and overcame, and the expedients to which she had recourse, give us the most extraordinary idea of her talents, her activity, and her masculine energy of mind. The undertaking was in fact so hazardous, that those who usually contracted for the supply of the army now refused to do it on any terms; Isabella was therefore left to her own resources: she constructed roads through the rugged mountainous frontier for the conveyance of the convoys; she hired fourteen thousand mules, which were incessantly employed in the transport of grain and other necessaries. To supply the almost incredible expense, she had not recourse to any oppressive measures of taxation; many prelates and convents opened to her their treasures; she pledged her own plate; and it is related that many wealthy individuals readily lent her large sums of

money, on no other security than her word: such was the character she bore among her subjects, such their confidence in her faith and truth.—“And thus,” says the Chronicle, “through the wonderful activity, judgment, and enterprise of this heroic and magnanimous woman, a great host, encamped in the heart of a warlike country, accessible only over mountain roads, was maintained in continual abundance;” and to her the ultimate success of the undertaking may be attributed. After the siege had lasted nearly seven months, at an immense cost of treasure and waste of life, Isabella came with her daughter, and all her retinue, and took up her residence in the camp. When, from the towers of Baza, the Moors beheld the queen and all her splendid train emerging from the defiles, and descending the mountain roads in a long and gorgeous array, they beat their breasts, and exclaimed, “Now is the fate of Baza decided!” yet such was the admiration and reverence which this extraordinary woman commanded even among her enemies, that not a gun was fired, not a shaft discharged, nor the slightest interruption offered to her progress. On her arrival, there was at once a cessation of all hostilities, as if by mutual though tacit consent, and shortly after Baza surrendered on honourable terms; the chief of the Moorish garrison, Prince

Cidi Yahye, was so captivated by the winning grace and courtesy with which Isabella received him, that he vowed never more to draw his sword against her ; the Queen accepted him as her knight, and replied to his animated expressions of devotion with much sweetness, saying, “ that now he was no longer opposed to her, she considered the war of Granada as already terminated.”

Baza surrendered, in Dec. 1489, and was soon followed by the submission of the haughty Moor, El Zagal, who, driven from place to place, and unable any longer to contend against the Christian forces, yielded up that part of the kingdom of Granada which yet acknowledged him as sovereign, and did homage to Ferdinand and Isabella as their vassal.

King Boabdil yet ruled in Granada, and the treaty of friendship between him and the Catholic king had been duly observed as long as it suited the policy of Ferdinand, but no sooner had El Zagal surrendered, than Boabdil was called upon to yield up his capital, and receive in lieu of it the revenues of certain Moorish towns. Boabdil might possibly have accepted these terms, but the citizens of Granada, and the warriors who had assembled within it, rose up against him, and under the command of Muza, a noble and valiant Moor, they returned a haughty defiance to Ferdinand,

declaring that they would perish beneath the walls of their glorious city, ere they would surrender this seat of Moorish power into the hands of unbelievers. Ferdinand and Isabella deferred for a time the completion of their conquest, and retired after this campaign to the city of Seville. In the spring of 1490, the Infanta Isabella was united to Don Alphonso, the Prince of Portugal; and for some weeks after the celebration of these nuptials, the court at Seville presented a continual scene of splendour and revelry, banquets, feasts, and tournaments. In the midst of these external rejoicings, the heart of Isabella bled over her approaching separation from her beloved daughter, and the young princess herself wore a look of settled melancholy, which seemed prophetic of the woes of her short-lived marriage.

It was just at this crisis that Columbus renewed his solicitations, and pressed for a decided answer to his propositions: he was referred, as before, to a council or board of inquiry, and the final report of this committee of "scientific men" is too edifying to be omitted here. It was their opinion, "that the scheme proposed was vain and impossible; and that it did not become such great princes to engage in an enterprise of the kind, on such weak grounds as had been advanced."*

* Vide Life and Voyages of Columbus.

Notwithstanding this unfavourable report, and the ill offices of Fernando de Talavera, the sovereigns did not wholly dismiss Columbus, but still held out a hope that at a future period, and after the conclusion of the war, they would probably renew the treaty with him. But Columbus had been wearied and disgusted by his long attendance on the court, and he would no longer listen to these evasive and indefinite promises; he quitted Seville in deep disappointment and indignation, at the very time that Ferdinand and Isabella were assembling the army destined for the siege of Granada, little suspecting, that while they were devoting all their energies, and expending all their resources in the conquest of a petty kingdom, they were blindly rejecting the acquisition of a world.

On the 11th of April 1491, King Ferdinand took the field for this last campaign: his army consisted of forty thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry; he was accompanied by his son, Don Juan, then a fine youth of sixteen, and by all the chivalry of Castile and Arragon, including the Marquis of Cadiz, and the Marquis of Villena; the Counts de Cabra, de Tendilla, Cifuentes, and Ureña, Don Alonzo de Aguilar, and Gonsalvo de Cordova, all names renowned in the annals of Spain. Isabella with her family and retinue re-

mained for a time at Alcala la Real, a strong place on the frontiers; but they soon afterwards quitted this fortress, and took up their residence in the camp before Granada. The Moors, excited by the enthusiasm and example of Muza, their heroic commander, defended their city with courageous obstinacy, and the environs of Granada were the scene of many romantic exploits and renowned deeds of arms. One or two of these adventures, in which Isabella was personally interested, ought to find a place here.

It happened on a certain day, when the siege had already lasted about two months, that a fierce Moorish chief, named El Tarfe, made a sally from the walls, with a band of followers. He galloped almost alone, up to the Christian camp, leaped the intrenchments, flung his lance into the midst of the royal tents, and then turning his horse, sprung again over the barriers, and galloped back to the city with a speed which left his pursuers far behind. When the tumult of surprise had ceased, the lance of El Tarfe was found quivering in the earth, and affixed to it a label, purporting that it was intended for the Queen Isabella.

Such an audacious insult offered to their adored and sovereign lady, filled the whole Christian host

with astonishment and indignation. A Castilian knight, named Perez de Pulgar, deeply swore to retort this insolent bravado on the enemy : accompanied by a few valiant friends, he forced his way through one of the gates of Granada, galloped up to the principal mosque, and there, throwing himself from his horse, he knelt down, and solemnly took possession of it, in the name of the Blessed Virgin. Then taking a tablet, on which were inscribed the words AVE MARIA, he nailed it to the portal of the mosque with his dagger, remounted his horse, and safely regained the camp, slaying or overturning all his opponents.

On the day which succeeded this daring exploit, Queen Isabella and her daughters expressed a wish to have a nearer view of the city, and of the glorious palace of the Alhambra, than they could obtain from the camp. The noble Marquis of Cadiz immediately prepared to gratify this natural but perilous curiosity ; assembling a brilliant and numerous escort, composed of chosen warriors, he conducted Isabella and her retinue to a rising ground nearer the city, whence they might view to advantage the towers and heights of the Alhambra.

When the Moors beheld this splendid and warlike array approaching their city, they sent forth a body of their bravest youth, who challenged the

Christians to the fight. But Isabella, unwilling that her curiosity should cost the life of one human being, absolutely forbade the combat; and her knights obeyed, but sorely against their will. All at once, the fierce and insolent El Tarfe, armed at all points, was seen to advance; he slowly paraded close to the Christian ranks, dragging at his horse's tail the inscription "Ave Maria," which Pulgar had affixed to the mosque a few hours before. On beholding this abominable sacrilege, all the zeal, the pride, the long restrained fury of the Castilians burst forth at once. Pulgar was not present, but one of his intimate friends, Garcilaso de la Vega,* threw himself at the feet of the queen, and so earnestly entreated her permission to avenge this insult, that his request was granted; he encountered and slew the Moor in single combat, and the engagement immediately became general. Isabella, at once shocked by the consequences of her curiosity, and terrified by the sudden onset and din of arms, threw herself on her knees with all her ladies, and prayed earnestly, while "lance to lance, and horse to horse," the battle fiercely raged around her: at length, victory decided for the Christians, and the Moors were driven back with loss upon the city. The

* This Garcilaso de la Vega is said to have been the father of the great poet.

Marquis of Cadiz then rode up to the queen, and while she yet trembled with agitation, he, with grave courtesy, apologized for the combat which had taken place, as if it had been a mere breach of etiquette, and gallantly attributed the victory to her presence. On the spot where this battle was fought Isabella founded a convent, which still exists, and in its garden is a laurel which, according to the tradition of the place, was planted by her own hand.

Not long afterwards, Isabella was exposed to still greater danger. One sultry night in the month of July, she had been lying on her couch reading by the light of a taper. About midnight she arose and went into her oratory to perform her devotions; and one of her attendants, in removing the taper, placed it too near the silken curtains which divided her magnificent pavilion into various compartments; the hangings, moved by the evening breeze, caught fire, and were instantly in a blaze; the conflagration spread from tent to tent, and in a few moments the whole of this division of the camp was in flames.

The queen had scarcely time to extricate herself from the burning draperies, and her first thought was for the safety of her husband; she flew to his tent; the king, upon the first alarm, and uncertain of the nature of the danger, had leaped from

his bed, and was rushing forth half dressed, with his sword in his hand. The king being in safety, Isabella's next thought was for her son ; he had already been extricated by his attendant, and carried to the tent of the Marquis of Cubra. No lives were lost, but the whole of the queen's wardrobe, and an immense quantity of arms and treasure were destroyed.

The Moors, who from their walls beheld this conflagration, entertained some hopes that such a terrible disaster, and the approach of winter, would induce the sovereigns to abandon the siege. Their astonishment was great when they saw a noble and regular city rise from the ruins of the camp. It owed its existence to the piety and magnanimity of Isabella, who founded it as a memorial of her gratitude to Heaven, and at the same time to manifest the determination of herself and her husband never to relinquish the siege while Granada remained standing. The army wished to call this new city by the name of their beloved queen, but the piety of Isabella disclaimed this compliment, and she named it *La Santa Fé*.

It was during the erection of this city that Queen Isabella once more dispatched a missive to Columbus, desiring his return to the Court, that she might have farther conference with him ; and she sent him at the same time, with that benevo-

lence which characterised her, a sum of money to bear his expenses, and to provide him with a mule for his journey, and habiliments fitted to appear in the royal presence. He arrived at the city of Santa Fé just as Granada, reduced to the last extremity by famine and the loss of its bravest inhabitants, had surrendered on terms of capitulation, and the standard of the cross and the great banner of Castile were seen floating together on the lofty watch-tower of the Alhambra. It was on the 6th of January 1492, that Isabella and Ferdinand made their triumphal entry into the fallen city; the unfortunate Boabdil met them and surrendered the keys to King Ferdinand. He would have dismounted and tendered the usual token of vassalage by kissing the hands of the king and queen, but they generously declined it; and Isabella, with many kind and courteous words, delivered to Boabdil his only son, who had hitherto been detained as a hostage. The Moorish monarch, accompanied by all his family and suite, then took his melancholy way towards the province which had been assigned to him as his future residence. On reaching a hill above Granada, (which has since been called by the Spaniards *el ultimo suspiro del Moro*, “the last sigh of the Moor,” Boabdil turned, and casting a last look back on the beautiful Vega, and the glorious city of his

forefathers, he burst into tears. "You do well," said his high-spirited mother, Ayxa, "to weep like a woman for what you knew not how to defend like a man!" The reproof might have been just, but in such a moment the cruel taunt ill became a mother's heart or lips. Boabdil afterwards retired to Africa, and resided in the territories of the King of Fez. He survived the conquest of Granada thirty-four years, and died at last on the field, valiantly fighting in defence of the kingdom of Fez.

The war of Granada lasted ten years, and with the surrender of the capital terminated the dominion of the Moors in Spain, which, dating from the defeat of Roderick, the last of the Goths, had endured seven hundred and seventy-eight years. When the tumult of this great triumph had in some degree subsided, Isabella had leisure to attend to Columbus, and the negotiation with him was renewed: the terms, however, on which he insisted with a lofty enthusiasm, appeared so exorbitant, when compared with his lowly condition and the vague nature of his views, that his old adversary, Fernando de Talavera, now archbishop of Granada, again interposed between him and the kind intentions of the queen; and said so much, that Isabella, after some hesitation, declared his pretensions to be inadmissible. Colum-

bus, on the other hand, would not abate one iota of his demands : in bitterness of spirit he saddled his mule, and turned his back on Santa Fé. Scarcely had he departed, when two of his most enthusiastic friends, who were besides high in the royal favour,* waited on the queen. They vindicated Columbus from the aspersions of Talavera ; they entreated, they remonstrated with all the zeal which their friendship for him and their loyalty to the queen could inspire. The Marchioness of Moya added to their arguments the most eloquent persuasions:—Isabella listened ; she had ever been friendly to this great and glorious enterprise, and her enthusiasm was now kindled by that of her friend :—she still hesitated for one moment, recollecting how completely the royal treasury was drained by the late war, and that the king, her husband, was coldly averse to the measure ; at length she exclaimed, “ It shall be so ; I will undertake the enterprise for my own kingdom of Castile, and will pledge my jewels for the necessary sum ! ” “ This,” says the historian of Columbus, “ was the proudest moment in the life of Isabella ; it stamped her renown for ever, as the patroness of the discovery of the New World.”

A courier was immediately dispatched to recall Columbus, who had already reached the bridge of

* Luis de St. Angel and Alonzo de Quintanilla.

Pinos two or three leagues from Granada. He hesitated at first, but when he was informed that the messenger came from the queen herself, and bore her pledge and promise, confiding in her royal word, he turned his mule at once, and retraced his steps to Santa Fé. The compact between the two sovereigns and Columbus was signed in April 1492, Isabella undertaking all the expenses, except one eighth, which was borne by the Admiral; and in the following August, Columbus set sail from Palos.

The history of his voyages and discoveries does not properly enter into the personal history of Queen Isabella. It may be remarked, generally, that in all her conduct towards Columbus, and all her views and decrees in the government of the newly discovered world, we find the same beautiful consistency, the same generous feeling, and the same rectitude of intention: next to that moment in which Isabella declared herself the sole patroness of Columbus, and undertook the voyage of discovery for her "own kingdom of Castile," the most memorable epoch of her life was his return from the New World, when she received him in state at Barcelona; and when, laying at her feet the productions of those unknown lands, he gave her a detailed narrative of his wonderful voyage.

Isabella was particularly struck by his account

of the inhabitants of these new found regions ; she took a tender interest in their welfare, and often reiterated her special commands to Columbus, that they should be treated with kindness, and converted or civilized only by the gentlest means. Of the variety of circumstances which interposed between these poor people and her benevolent intentions, we can only judge by a detailed account of the events which followed, and the characters of those entrusted with the management of the new discoveries. When the most pious churchmen and enlightened statesmen of her time could not determine whether it was or was not lawful, and according to the Christian religion, to enslave the Indians ; when Columbus himself pressed the measure as a political necessity, and at once condemned to slavery those who offered the slightest opposition to the Spanish invaders, Isabella settled the matter according to the dictates of her own merciful heart and upright mind. She ordered that all the Indians should be conveyed back to their respective homes, and forbade, absolutely, all harsh measures towards them on any pretence. Unable, at such a distance, to measure all the difficulties with which Columbus had to contend, her indignation fell on him ; and the cruelties which his followers exercised, at least under the sanction of his name, drew on him her deep displeasure.

While under the immediate auspices of Isabella these grand discoveries were proceeding in the New World, Ferdinand was engrossed by ambitious projects nearer home. Naples had been invaded by Charles VIII. in 1494, and Gonsalvo de Cordova had been sent to oppose him. Gonsalvo, "the Great Captain," by a series of brilliant military successes, and political perfidies of the deepest die, in the end secured the kingdom of Naples for his master, Ferdinand. The legitimate heir, and last descendant of the family of Alphonso the Magnanimous, was brought a prisoner to Spain, and died there, after a captivity of fifty years.

Isabella, meantime, in the interior of her palace, was occupied by interests and feelings nearer and dearer to her heart than the conquest of kingdoms, or the discovery of worlds; and during the last few years of her life was gradually crushed to the earth by a series of domestic calamities, which no human wisdom could have averted, and for which no earthly prosperity could afford consolation.

In 1496, her mother, the Queen Dowager of Castile, died in her arms. In 1497, just before Columbus sailed on his third voyage, a double family arrangement had been made between the houses of Spain and Austria, which bade fair to

consolidate the power of both. The Infanta Joanna was betrothed to the Archduke Philip, son and heir of the Emperor Maximilian; and the same splendid and gallant fleet which bore her from the shores of Spain, brought back Margaret of Austria,* the destined wife of Prince Juan, the only son of Isabella and Ferdinand. In the spring of 1497, Juan and Margaret, then both in the bloom of youth, were united at Burgos, with all befitting pomp and revelry.

* Margaret of Austria was one of the most accomplished and remarkable women of that time. Before her marriage with Prince Juan she had been betrothed to Charles VIII. of France, and on her voyage to Spain, meeting with a violent storm which threatened to engulf the whole fleet, she collected her most valuable jewels and bound them on her arm, together with a slip of paper, on which she had written with her pencil the well-known couplet—

“Ci-git Margot, la gentill’ demoiselle,
Qu’a deux maris, et encore est pucelle!”

A singular instance of strength and presence of mind in a young princess of seventeen. She was afterwards contracted, or married, to two or three husbands successively, but at four-and-twenty, being disgusted with these matrimonial experiments, Margaret determined to pass the rest of her life in a single state. She was afterwards Governess of the Netherlands; and in the name of her nephew, Charles V., who entrusted her with full powers, she negotiated with Louisa, the mother of Francis I., the peace of Cambray, hence called in history “la paix des dames” Margaret died in 1530.

The queen's most beloved daughter, the Princess Isabella, had lost her young husband, Alphonso of Portugal; within four months after his marriage he was killed by a fall from his horse, and she retired to a convent, where, from an excess of grief or piety, she gave herself up to a course of religious abstinence and austerities which undermined her constitution. Several years after the death of Alphonso, she was induced to bestow her hand on his cousin and heir, Don Emanuel, who had just ascended the throne of Portugal. While yet the customary festivities were going forward upon the occasion of this royal marriage, the young Prince Juan died of a fever, within five months after his marriage with Margaret, and her infant perished ere it saw the light. Isabella, though struck to the heart by this cruel disappointment of her best hopes and affections, found strength in her habitual piety to bear the blow, and was beginning to recover from the first bitterness of grief, when a stroke, even more lastingly and deeply felt, bowed her almost to the grave with sorrow. Her daughter, the Queen of Portugal, whom she appears to have loved and trusted beyond every human being, died in childbirth at Toledo; bequeathing to her mother's care a beautiful but feeble infant, the heir to Castile, Arragon, and Granada; to Portu-

gal, Navarre, Naples, Sicily, and to all the opening glories of the eastern and western worlds. As if crushed beneath the burthen of such magnificent destinies, the child pined away and died. These successive losses followed so quick upon one another, that it seemed as if the hand of heaven had doomed the house of Ferdinand and Isabella to desolation.

The reader need hardly be reminded of the ignominious and ungrateful treatment of Columbus; nor of the manner in which he was sent home after his third voyage, loaded with fetters, from the world he had discovered, to the sovereigns he had enriched and aggrandised by his discoveries. In justice to Isabella, it is fit to account for her share in this revolting transaction, and it cannot be done better or more succinctly than in the very words of the historian of Columbus.

“The queen having taken a maternal interest in the welfare of the natives, had been repeatedly offended by, what appeared to her, pertinacity on the part of Columbus, in continuing to make slaves of those taken in warfare, in contradiction to her known wishes. The same ships which brought home the companions of Roldan, brought likewise a great number of slaves. Some Columbus had been obliged to grant to these men by articles of capitulation, others they had brought

away clandestinely; among them were several daughters of caciques, who had been seduced away from their families and their native island by these profligates. The gifts and transfers of these unhappy beings were all ascribed to the will of Columbus, and represented to Isabella in their darkest colours. Her sensibility as a woman, and her dignity as a queen, were instantly in arms. ‘What power,’ she exclaimed indignantly, ‘has the admiral to give away my vassals?’ She determined by one decided and peremptory act to show her abhorrence of these outrages upon humanity; she ordered all the Indians to be restored to their country and friends. Nay, more, her measure was retrospective. She commanded that those who had formerly been sent home by the admiral, should be sought out, and sent back to Hispaniola. Unfortunately for Columbus, at this very juncture, in one of his letters, he had advised the continuance of Indian slavery for some time longer, as a measure important for the welfare of the colony. This contributed to heighten the indignation of Isabella, and induced her no longer to oppose the sending out of a commission to investigate his conduct, and, if necessary, to supersede his commission.” When Columbus had sailed on his first voyage of discovery, Isabella had given a strong proof of her kindly feeling to-

wards him, by appointing his sons pages to Don Juan; thus providing for their education, and opening to them a path to the highest offices in the court: hence, perhaps, arose the friendship which existed between Columbus and Donna Joanna de Torres, who had been nurse, or *gouvernante* of the young prince, and was high in the confidence and favour of Isabella. Too proud, perhaps, to address himself immediately to those who had injured him, Columbus wrote to Donna Joanna a detailed account of the disgraceful treatment he had met, and justified his own conduct. The court was then at Granada, and Joanna de Torres in attendance on the queen; no sooner had she received the letter, than she carried it to her mistress, and read aloud this solemn and affecting appeal against the injustice and ingratitude with which his services had been recompensed. Isabella, who had never contemplated such an extremity, was filled with mingled astonishment, indignation, and sorrow. She immediately wrote to Columbus, expressing her grief for all he had endured, apologising for the conduct of Bovadilla, and inviting him in affectionate terms to visit the court. He came accordingly, "not as one in disgrace, but richly dressed, and with all the marks of rank and distinction. Isabella received him in the Alhambra, and when he entered her apart-

ment she was so overpowered that she burst into tears, and could only extend her hand to him. Columbus himself, who had borne up firmly against the stern conflicts of the world, and had endured with a lofty scorn the injuries and insults of ignoble men, when he beheld the queen's emotion, could no longer suppress his own; he threw himself at her feet, and for some time was unable to utter a word, for the violence of his tears and sobbings.* There can be no doubt that, had it depended on Isabella, Columbus would never more have had reason to complain of injustice or ingratitude on the part of the sovereigns; he had won her entire esteem and her implicit confidence, and all her intentions towards him were sincerely kind and upright.† It was owing to the interference of Ferdinand and his ministers, that the viceroyalty of the New World was taken from him and given to Ovando, as a temporary measure: but it was under Isabella's peculiar patronage and protection that he sailed on his fourth voyage of discovery in 1502.

Isabella did not live to see him return from this eventful and disastrous voyage. A dark cloud had gathered over her latter years, and domestic griefs and cares pressed heavily upon her affectionate heart. The Princess Joanna, now her

* Vide *Life and Voyages of Columbus.* † *Ibid.*

heiress, had married the Archduke Philip of Austria, who was remarkable for his gay manners and captivating person; the marriage had been one of mere policy on his part. But the poor princess, who, unhappily for herself, united to a plain person, and infirm health, strong passions and great sensibility, had centred all her affections in her husband, whom she regarded with a fond and exclusive idolatry, while he returned her attachment with the most negligent coolness. It does not appear that the imbecility of Joanna was natural, but rather the effect of accident and disease, for occasionally she displayed glimpses of strong sense, generous pride, and high feeling, which rendered the derangement of her faculties more intensely painful and affecting. Though Isabella had the satisfaction of seeing Joanna a mother; though she pressed in her arms a grandson,* whose splendid destinies, if she could have beheld them through the long lapse of years, might in part have consoled her, yet the feeble health of this infant, and the sight of her daughter's misery, embittered her days. At length, on the departure of Philip for the Low Countries, the unhappy Joanna gave way to such transports of grief, that it ended in the complete bereavement of her senses. To this terrible blow was added

* Afterwards the Emperor Charles V.

another; for about the same time, the news arrived that Catherine of Arragon had lost her young husband, Prince Arthur, after a union of only five months. Isabella's maternal heart, wounded in the early death or protracted sorrows of her children, had no hope, no consolation, but in her deep sense of religion. Ximenes was at this time her confessor. In his strong and upright, but somewhat harsh and severe mind, she found that support and counsel which might aid her in grappling with the cares of empire, but not the comfort which could soothe her affliction as a mother. Ferdinand was so engrossed by his Italian wars, and in weaving subtle webs of policy either to ensnare his neighbours, or veil his own deep-laid plans, that he had little thought or care for domestic sorrows. So Isabella pined away lonely in her grandeur, till the deep melancholy of her mind seized on her constitution, and threw her into a rapid decline. While on her death-bed, she received intelligence of Ovando's tyrannical government at Hispaniola, and of the barbarities which had been exercised upon the unhappy Indians; her horror and indignation hastened the effects of her disease. With her dying breath, she exacted from Ferdinand a solemn promise that he would instantly recall Ovando, redress the grievances of the poor Indians, and protect them

from all future oppression. Ferdinand gave the required promise, and how he kept it, is recorded in traces of blood and guilt in the history of the New World. Soon after this conversation, Isabella expired at Medina del Campo, after a lingering illness of four months; she died on the 25th of November, 1505, in the fifty-fourth year of her age, having reigned thirty-one years. In her last will, she expressed a wish to be buried in the Alhambra, “in a low sepulchre, without any monument, unless the king, her lord, should desire that his body after death should rest in any other spot. In that case, she willed that her body should be removed and laid beside that of the king, wherever it might be deposited:” in order, adds this affecting document of her piety, tenderness, and humility—“in order that the union we have enjoyed while living, and which (through the mercy of God) we hope our souls will experience in Heaven, may be represented by our bodies in the earth.”

The character of Isabella, as a woman and a queen, though not free from the failings incidental to humanity, is certainly the most splendid, and at the same time the most interesting and blameless which history has recorded. She had all the talents, the strength of mind, and the royal pride of Queen Elizabeth, without her harshness, her

despotism, and her arrogance : and she possessed the personal grace, the gentleness and feminine accomplishments of Mary Stuart, without her weakness. Her virtues were truly her own ; her faults and errors were the result of external circumstances, and belonged to the times and the situation in which she was placed. What is most striking and singular in the character of Isabella, is the union of excessive pride—Castilian pride, amounting at times to haughtiness, and even wilfulness, whenever her dignity as a queen was concerned, with extreme sensibility and softness of deportment as a woman. She adored her husband, and yet would never suffer him to interfere with her authority as an independent sovereign ; and she was as jealous of her prerogative as Elizabeth herself. When the Cortes of Arragon hesitated to acknowledge her daughter Joanna the heiress to Arragon as well as to Castile, Isabella exclaimed with all the wilfulness of a proud woman, “ Another time, it were a shorter way to assemble an army, instead of assembling the states ! ”

Isabella's extreme deference for the ecclesiastics round her, was a misfortune for her people ; but consistently even with the best points in her character, it could not have been otherwise. She was, from education, early impressions, and a natural enthusiasm of temper, exceedingly devout, ac-

according to the received idea of true piety. A Luther had not yet arisen to break asunder those bonds which chained down the most powerful and the most enlightened spirits of that age; Isabella could hardly be expected to think for herself, on points which it was considered a deadly sin to discuss, and on which the wisest and greatest men of those times, *dared* not entertain a doubt. Yet, while Isabella revered the Churchmen as the organs of that Church in the bosom of which she reposed her hopes of salvation, her submission was far less blind and bigoted than is usually imagined. She drew a line, beyond which she would not permit the ecclesiastical power to presume. When the President and Council of Valladolid permitted an appeal to the Pope, on a matter merely civil, she was so indignant, that she first suspended and then deposed the whole of these functionaries as a warning to others.

While yet a girl, Isabella had for her confessor the Dominican Torquemada. This fanatic, of whom we may in charity suppose that his brain was turned by zeal and religious austerities, had extorted from her a promise, ratified by a solemn vow, that if ever she ascended the throne of Castile, she would employ all human means to root heresy and infidelity out of her kingdom. But neither this vow, though subsequently pressed

upon her ; nor the impetuous eloquence of the fiery Torquemada ; nor the arguments of the Cardinal Mendoza ; nor the persuasions of her Confessor Talavera ; nor the influence of her husband, nor all united, could, for a length of time, conquer her repugnance to the establishment of the Inquisition. She consented at last, after resisting for five years, and could she have foreseen all the horrors that ensued, she would herself have died at the stake, rather than have lent her fair name to sanction that infernal engine of tyranny.

It was under the auspices of Isabella, that Cardinal Ximenes introduced his famous reforms into the religious orders of Spain ; the correction of the horrible abuses which had crept into the convents was strongly resisted, and occasioned a general outcry of all the clergy. The General of the Franciscans waited on the queen, and remonstrated in high terms against this interference with the privileges of his order ; at the same time reflecting severely on Cardinal Ximenes, and his influence over her mind. Isabella listened to this turbulent friar with some impatience ; but little accustomed to be dictated to in this style, she at length rose from her seat and desired him to remember who he was and to whom he spoke. “ Madam,” replied the monk undauntedly, “ I remember that I am but ashes and dust, and

that I speak to Queen Isabella, who is but dust and ashes like myself." Isabella immediately turned from him with a look of cool disdain. The next day he was ordered to quit the kingdom, and Ximenes, supported by the royal power, pursued his system of reformation.

It is worthy of remark that Isabella, though exposed in early life to all the contagion of a most depraved court, preserved a reputation unsullied even by the breath of calumny. The women who formed her court and habitual society were generally estimable. The men who owed their rise to her particular favour and patronage, justified her penetration, and were all distinguished either for worth or talent. The most illustrious were Columbus and Ximenes, certainly the two greatest men of that time, in point of original capacity, boldness of thought, and integrity of purpose. Her husband, Ferdinand, hated and oppressed the former, and hated and feared the latter. Both would have been distinguished in any age or in any circumstances, but, next to themselves, owed their rise and their fame to Isabella. It was in the reign of Isabella that the Spanish language and literature began to assume a polished and regular form. The two most celebrated poets of her time were the Marquis de Santillana, (father of the gay young Duke del Infantado already mentioned,) and Juan de

Encina, whom she particularly patronised, and who translated the Eclogues of Virgil into Spanish for her pleasure and amusement. She also patronised the newly invented art of printing. The first printing-press set up in Spain was established at Burgos under her auspices, and printed books, and foreign and classical works were imported free of all duty. Through her zeal and patronage the University of Salamanca rose to that eminence which it assumed among the learned institutions of that period, and rivalled those of Pisa and Padua. She prepared the way for that golden age of Spanish literature which immediately succeeded. Garcilaso de la Vega, the greatest of the Spanish poets, was born in the same year that Isabella died.

The plan which Isabella appears to have had most at heart during the whole of her reign, was the internal regulation of her states, and the moral improvement of her people. The long civil wars, and the weak, disgraceful reign of her predecessor, had disjoined all the springs of government, had substituted for the royal authority that of many petty tyrants, and filled the country with bands of lawless depredators. Some idea may be formed of the extent of these evils, from the fact, that when Isabella repaired to Seville in 1481, for the avowed purpose of apprehending and punish-

ing all those who lived by illegal or violent means, no less than four thousand persons took to flight, conscious that the sword of justice, once unsheathed, must find and strike at their misdeeds. The institution of the Holy Brotherhood, (*La Santa Hermandad*,) so often alluded to in *Don Quixote*, and the Spanish Tales and Dramas, was a confederacy of respectable persons of different great cities for the protection of their persons and property in those evil times. Isabella, conscious of its importance, granted the royal sanction to this brotherhood, and caused its officers to be legally incorporated into a kind of royal or national police ; this she effected in spite of the most determined opposition from the nobility and higher clergy, who deemed their privileges invaded, and whose power of doing evil was certainly thereby diminished. Of Isabella's innate sense of justice, her magnanimity, her strong and warm affections, her gentle and beneficent disposition, sufficient has been said in the foregoing sketch of her life. Brantome records one speech of hers, but without relating the occasion which gave rise to it. "The fruit of clemency," said Isabella, "is more sweet and grateful to a queen, endued by heaven with beauty, spirit, and the love of true honour, than any gratified vengeance, however just and reasonable."

Upon the whole, Isabella appears to have deserved the simple, but beautiful designation, which the love of her people bestowed upon her : —“ *Isabella de la paz y bontad* :”—Isabella of peace and goodness; and the universal regret and enthusiastic eulogies with which they embalmed her memory have been ratified by history and posterity.

On the death of Isabella, her daughter Joanna, and Philip of Austria, succeeded to the throne of Castile. Ferdinand had promised Isabella on her death-bed, that he would never enter into a second marriage which might deprive her children of the inheritance of Arragon. But excited by ambition, and jealousy of his son-in-law Philip, Ferdinand ungratefully violated this promise, and within two years after the death of Isabella, he married Germaine de Foix, niece of Louis XII. and sister of the celebrated Gaston de Foix; she was then in her eighteenth year, Ferdinand in his fifty-fourth; by this marriage he left no heirs, and on his death, in 1517, his grandson, Don Carlos, the eldest son of Joanna and Philip, ascended the throne of Spain in right of his mother, and was soon afterwards elected Emperor of Germany, by the title of Charles V.

MARY,
QUEEN OF SCOTS.

To a young and candid mind, a state of suspicion, mistrust, and uncertainty, is at once painful and unnatural ;—but however disagreeable and difficult it may be to doubt ;—however pleasant and easy to take all things for granted, the youthful reader ought to be informed, that there are certain points on which the highest historical authorities are at variance with each other ; and human testimony so nicely balanced, that every reasonable being has a right, after due reflection and examination, to form his own opinion. Where men of equal information, equal judgment, equal talent, equal candour, differ absolutely, and entirely, it must be hard for others to determine. Young people are apt to form rash and hasty judgments ; to imagine they know all, when in fact they know only a part. It would teach them

a becoming caution in forming, and a becoming modesty in expressing opinions, if in the course of their studies, the subjects of dispute were frankly pointed out to them, and the reasons for doubts explained ; if they considered the numerous points on which wise, and learned, and good men have found it most difficult to decide, and after all differ from each other. The character and many events of the life of Mary Stuart are among these disputed points. She has had determined, able, and conscientious adversaries ; she has found enthusiastic, accomplished, and equally conscientious defenders ; and since in this little work no part of the testimony for or against her can be properly introduced, every controverted point will at least be noticed as such in its place. Those who may not have time or opportunity to consider the works written on both sides of the question, should keep their opinions for the present suspended. Let them not permit their compassion for unexampled misfortunes, nor ~~their~~ admiration for acknowledged accomplishments, to bias them on one side ; nor their natural horror for imputed crimes, and respect for great names, to incline them on the other. For this is not like some of the disputes which have distracted antiquaries and divided the literary world ; it is not as to whether a battle was fought on this spot or that spot,

whether an event occurred in this or that year; it is a question of justice or injustice. When Dr. Robertson says that "Humanity will draw a veil over such parts of Mary's conduct as we cannot approve,"—meaning, we presume, over her profligate attachment to Bothwell, and the murder of the husband of her youth, of which he *believes* her guilty,—it may be answered, that Humanity will draw no such veil, and ought not; the dead, who are insensible to our pity and our tears, ought at least to have *justice* at our hands for the sake of the living.

The parallel which in Mary's own time, or at least immediately after her death, was drawn between her and Joanna of Naples,* presents so many curious coincidences, and so many striking points of comparison, that it shall be examined hereafter, though not exactly in the spirit of the original author, who appears to have been bitterly prejudiced against both queens. We must first, however, cast a glance over the principal events of Mary's life and reign, and recall the most striking parts of her character, whether founded in nature, or springing from education and external circumstances.

* In a work entitled "L'apologie ou defense de l'honorable sentence et très juste execution de deffuncte Marie Stuart dernière Regne d'Ecosse," published in England, for the purpose of being distributed abroad, and quoted by Brantome in his Life of Joanna.

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, was born in the palace of Linlithgow, on the 7th of December 1542. Her father James V. was a brave, handsome, gallant, and accomplished prince; her mother was Mary of Guise, sister of the celebrated Duc de Guise, and widow of the Duc de Longueville; she was a woman who in private life was without blame, universally respected for her wisdom and talents, her justice, her piety, and her humanity. She had, however, the high spirit and the passion for political power which characterised the family of Guise, and she lived and died in the midst of troubles which she could not appease, and in the midst of factions which she could not reconcile.

Mary was only seven days old when her father died, and within ten months afterwards she was solemnly crowned at Stirling by Cardinal Beaton, and proclaimed Queen of Scotland. James Hamilton Earl of Arran, was appointed Regent of the kingdom during her minority; but the principal care of the young queen was left to her mother, who watched over her infancy with truly maternal anxiety. A very short time after her birth, a design was formed to match her with young Edward VI. of England, then Prince of Wales. It was a favourite object with Henry VIII. thus to unite the two kingdoms, and he brought over the Regent to his views; but the

Queen-mother and Cardinal Beaton, supported by many of the nobles, strongly opposed a measure which would render Scotland a mere province of England, endanger the Roman Catholic religion, and embroil the country with France, their ancient friend and ally. Arran was obliged to yield to these representations; the treaty of marriage was broken off, and the consequence was a destructive war, in which the Scotch were defeated at the battle of Pinkie with the loss of 8000 men, and many towns and villages were ravaged and pillaged by the English invaders.

At this time Mary resided at Stirling castle, under the guardianship of Lord Erskine and Lord Livingstone; thence she was removed, when about four years old, to Inchmahone, a little island on the lake of Monteith. Her mother selected four young ladies of rank of her own age to be the companions of her studies, and her playmates in this solitude: they all bore the same name, and were afterwards called "the Queen's Maries." They were Mary Beaton, Mary Seyton, Mary Fleming, and Mary Livingstone; they are thus alluded to in an old ballad:

" Last night the Queen had four Maries,
To-night she'll ha'e but three ;—
There was Mary Seyton, and Mary Beaton,
And Mary Livingstone and *me* !"

Who *me* was, is not known ; for as the four origi-

nal Maries, one by one, married and left her service, the queen replaced them with new ones of the same name, and seems to have pleased herself with the fancy of having four Maries always in attendance upon her.

The result of the disputes with England was a new and closer alliance with France, which materially changed the destiny of the young queen. A treaty of marriage was concluded between her and the infant Dauphin, Francis, the son of Henry the Second. By this treaty it was agreed, that Mary should be sent to France, placed under the care of the French king, and educated in his court, and Henry was to send an army of 6000 men to aid the Scotch against the English. The articles of this treaty were duly performed on both sides; and the same vessels which brought over the French troops, conveyed Mary from her native shore.

In July 1548, she sailed from Dumbarton, accompanied by her guardians, her four Maries, and other attendants, landed at Brest, and proceeded to Paris, where she was received as became the Queen of Scotland and the destined Queen of France. Of the education which Mary received at the French court, it is necessary to say a few words, because it must, by influencing her character, have greatly influenced her fate. She was only five years old when she arrived there, and

spent thirteen happy years in that country. She was first sent to a convent with the king's daughters, where she made a rapid progress in all the accomplishments they attempted to teach her. Here her enthusiastic disposition and lively fancy were so strongly impressed with religious feelings, and she became so fond of a retired life, that when, in consequence of her too great inclination for the cloister, she was removed to gayer scenes, and obliged to take up her residence in a palace, she shed torrents of tears. She afterwards made frequent visits to the young friends she had left in the convent, and embroidered, with her own hands, an altar-piece for their chapel. When we are told that Catherine de Medicis was at the head of that court and society, in which Mary's education was completed, we shudder at her very name, and tremble at the idea of the contagion to which the youthful queen was exposed: but we must not forget that at this time Catherine de Medicis was herself a very young woman; she was not long married;—she had given no indication of those perfidious and cruel designs which afterwards worked in “her Italian brain,” and have associated her name with all we can conceive of most detestable. She was respected for her splendid talents, and for the dignity and propriety of her conduct. The Princess Margaret of France, her

sister-in-law, was a woman of singular accomplishments and virtue. There was much wickedness and profligacy in the court; but with these two princesses and her own Scottish attendants, Mary principally associated. Her governess, Lady Fleming, was a Scotch woman, and her confessor, Reid Bishop of Orkney, was also her own countryman. Her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, undertook to direct her studies, and all her tutors were celebrated men: Buchanan taught her Latin; Pasquier instructed her in history; and Ronsard, the most famous of the early French poets, cultivated her taste for poetry. She sung and played on the lute and the virginals, (a kind of spinet or harpsichord.) The fashion for learning prevailed at that time in France, and Mary profited by it: she understood French, Latin, and Italian perfectly, and she wrote in French with peculiar elegance; she was well acquainted with history and with classical literature: she rode on horseback fearlessly, yet with feminine grace, and was fond of hunting. Her dancing was always admired: we are assured, that “in the Spanish minuet she was equalled only by her aunt, the beautiful Anne of Este, and no lady of the court could eclipse her in the galliarde.” Her beauty and the charming expression of her countenance were such, that, as her contemporary Brantome asserts, “no one could

look upon her without loving her." When her mother, Mary of Guise, came over to visit her in 1550, she burst into tears of joy, and congratulated herself on her daughter's capacity and loveliness. It is very possible, that in the midst of all these advantages, flattery, and the homage of those around, may have rendered Mary impatient of contradiction, and fond of admiration and pleasure; neither is it too much to suppose that her early initiation into the French court had somewhat blunted in her mind the severity of moral principle. Soon after Mary of Guise returned to Scotland, she was declared Queen-Regent, and under that name governed the kingdom till her death, in 1560.

The marriage so long contemplated between Mary of Scotland and the Dauphin, was celebrated on the 24th of April 1558, when Mary was in her sixteenth year. The ceremony was performed in the church of Notre Dame, by the Cardinal of Bourbon, Archbishop of Rouen. "Upon this occasion, the festivities were graced by the presence of all the most illustrious personages of the court of France; and when Francis, taking a ring from his finger, presented it to the Archbishop, who, pronouncing the benediction, placed it on the young queen's finger, the vaulted roof of the cathedral rung with congratulations, and the multitude without rent the air with joyful

shouts. The spectacle was altogether one of the most imposing which, even in that age of spectacles, had been seen in Paris. The procession, upon leaving the church, proceeded to the palace of the archbishop, where a magnificent collation was prepared ; largess, as it moved along, being proclaimed among the people, in the name of the King and Queen of Scots. In the afternoon, the royal party returned to the palace of the Tournells ; Catherine de Medicis and Mary sitting in one palanquin, and a cardinal walking on each side. Henry and Francis followed on horseback, with a long line of princes and princesses in their train. The chronicler of these nuptials is unable to conceal his rapture, when he describes the manner in which the palace had been prepared for their reception. Its whole appearance, he tells us, was ‘light and beautiful as Elysium.’ During supper, which was served upon a marble table in the great hall, the king’s band of ‘one hundred gentlemen,’ poured forth delicious strains of music. The members of parliament attended in their robes, and the princes of the blood performing the part of servitors, the Duke of Guise acting as master of the ceremonies. The banquet being concluded, a series of the most magnificent masks and mummeries, prepared for the occasion, was introduced. In the pageant, twelve artificial horses of admirable mechanism, covered with cloth

of gold, and ridden by the young heirs of noble houses, attracted deserved attention. They were succeeded by six galleys, which sailed into the hall, each rich as Cleopatra's barge, and bearing on its deck two seats, the one filled by a young cavalier, who, as he advanced, carried off from among the spectators, and gently placed in the vacant chair, the lady of his love. A splendid tournament concluded these rejoicings." *

Francis was far inferior to his young bride both in person and in mind, and is described as being of a sickly constitution, and of a shy, timid, reserved, but affectionate and kind disposition. They were fond of each other, for they had been brought up together from infancy, with a knowledge that they were destined to pass their lives together. Francis did not survive his marriage more than two years, and during that time Mary treated him with invariable tenderness and respectful attention. At this period of her life, Mary was distinguished by the title of 'La Reine Dauphine.'

Soon after the celebration of Mary's nuptials, Queen Elizabeth ascended the English throne; being a Protestant, the See of Rome, and the French and Spanish Courts refused to acknowledge her; and Mary being indisputably the next heir, was persuaded, or rather was commanded by the

* Life of Mary Queen of Scots, vol. i. p. 63.

King of France, her father-in-law, and the Guises, her uncles, to assume the title and arms of Queen of England. A fatal mistake, of which she could not then calculate the consequences, but which, by first arousing the jealousy and hatred of Elizabeth, led the way to her own destruction.

In July 1559, the Dauphin succeeded to the throne, by the death of his father, Henry II., (who was accidentally killed in a tournament,) and in the September following, Francis and Mary were solemnly crowned at Rheims, King and Queen of France. But the health of the young king was already rapidly declining, and in a few months afterwards he expired at Orleans, whither he had been carried for the benefit of the air. Almost the last words he spoke, were expressions of tenderness and confidence towards his queen, whom he earnestly recommended to the care of his mother and his brother. Francis was in his eighteenth year when he died, after a reign of about a year and a-half. Mary is described by an eye-witness, as a ‘sorrowful widow,’ and appears to have lamented her husband very sincerely; indeed, without attributing to her any very passionate regard for her boyish consort, she could not be insensible to the loss of one who had loved her from infancy, and by whose death she was left to feel herself a stranger and an intruder in the land which had been the scene of her youth-

ful happiness ; of which she had been the crowned queen. Catherine de Medicis, intent upon her own ambitious projects, now viewed her with ‘jealous leer malign :’ Mary had, in early life, wounded the vanity of Catherine by once boasting of her own descent from a “hundred Kings,” which was supposed to reflect upon Catherine’s descent from a family of Florentine merchants, (the Medici.) This offence, probably unintentional, had rankled in Catherine’s vindictive mind. Mary’s uncles, the princes of the house of Guise, had been banished from court: all things were changed around her. In this situation she formed the resolution of returning to her native kingdom, but it was a resolution made with regret and executed with reluctance.

The heads of the Reformed party in Scotland, or, as they were called, the ‘Lords of the Congregation,’ had entered into a treaty of peace with Queen Elizabeth—‘the treaty of Edinburgh,’ as it is called in history ; and when this was sent over to Mary to be ratified by her, she found, that by the sixth article, she was bound to resign all right and title to the throne of England ‘for ever,’ and she absolutely refused to subscribe to a condition which appeared to her so unjust and so degrading. After much reluctance and hesitation, she at length expressed herself content to resign all title to

the English crown, as long as Elizabeth or her heirs existed ; but since she was by birth and by law, and in the eyes of all Europe, the next heir, she would not consent to sign away her unalienable rights, and at the same time those of her posterity. Elizabeth commanded Nicholas Throckmorton, her ambassador in France, to wait on the Scottish Queen, and press upon her the expediency of ratifying this treaty ; but Mary was firm, although her firmness was tempered with courtesy and gentleness. “ Though the terms,” said she, alluding to the late wars between the two countries, “ wherein we have stood heretofore, have been somewhat hard, yet I trust that from henceforth we shall accord together as cousins and good neighbours. I mean to retire all the Frenchmen from Scotland who have given jealousy to the Queen my sister, and discontent to my subjects ; so that I will leave nothing undone to satisfy all parties, trusting the Queen, my good sister, will do the like ; and that from henceforth none of my disobedient subjects shall find aid or support at her hands.” Throckmorton wished to discover whether she intended to pursue any violent measures with regard to the Scottish Protestants, who were inclined at once to dread and to condemn their Roman Catholic Queen. The spirit, intelligence, and firmness of Mary’s reply appears extraordinary in a girl of eighteen ;

but her words are repeated by Throckmorton himself, who was little inclined to favour her. “ I will be plain with you,” said she: “ The religion I profess, I take to be the most acceptable to God; and indeed, I neither know, nor desire to know any other: constancy becometh all people well, but none better than princes, and such as have rule over realms, and especially in matters of religion. I have been brought up in this religion; and who might credit me in any thing, if I should show myself light in this case? I am none of those that will change their religion every year; but I mean to constrain none of my subjects, though I could wish that they were all as I am; and I trust they shall have no support to constrain me.”—Mary had sent to demand of Elizabeth a free passage to her own country; it was a mere point of courtesy and etiquette, usual between one sovereign and another, but it was refused; and Throckmorton, in another conference, attempted to explain the reason of this refusal, again referring to the treaty of Edinburgh to justify his mistress; whose conduct on this occasion, arising from exasperation and jealousy, was inexcusable and mean, as well as discourteous. Mary replied to the representations of the ambassador with infinite dignity and spirit, “ There is nothing that doth more grieve me than

that I did so forget myself, as to require of the queen, your mistress, that favour which I had no need to ask. I may pass well enough home to mine own realm, I think, without her passport or licence: for though the late king, your master, used all the impeachment he could, both to stay me and catch me, when I came hither; yet you know, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, I came hither safely, and I may have as good means to help me home again! It seemeth that the queen, your mistress, maketh more account of my disobedient subjects than she doth of me, their sovereign, who am her equal in degree, though inferior in wisdom and experience; her nighest kinswoman and her next neighbour." She repeated her refusal to subscribe to the treaty of Edinburgh, and gave her reasons in the most forcible, but at the same time the most courteous terms; denying all intention to wrong or offend Elizabeth, and amply apologising for the assumption of the crown and arms of England, during the life of her late husband; she reminded the ambassador, that since that time she had neither borne the arms, nor used the title of England. "Me-thinks," she said, "these my doings might ascertain the queen, your mistress, that what was done before, was done by commandment of them that had power over me; and also in reason, she ought

to be satisfied, seeing I now order my doings as I tell you." But Elizabeth was neither to be pacified nor satisfied. When Mary embarked at Calais, in August 1561, with a cortège of noble and distinguished persons, (among whom were three of her uncles, the Duke D'Anville, son to the Constable Montmorenci, the Historian Brantome, and the Poet Chatelard, her four Maries, from whom she had never been separated, and several French ladies of distinction,) Elizabeth sent out vessels to intercept her, but she passed them in a thick fog, and thus escaped. The grief, almost despair with which Mary took leave of her adopted country, is well known. She stood upon the deck gazing through her tears on the fast receding shore, and when night came on, she caused a couch to be spread for her on the deck, and wept herself to sleep. "I am so far unlike the Carthaginian Dido," said Mary on this occasion, "that she looked perpetually on the sea when Æneas departed, whilst all my regards are for the land.*

* The scene is thus described with the most picturesque naïveté by Brantome, who was present. "Elle, sans songer à autre action, s'appuye les deux bras sur la poupe de la galère du côté du timon, et se mit à fondre en grosses larmes, jettant toujours ses beaux yeux sur le port et le lieu d'où elle était partie, prononçant toujours ces tristes paroles : ' Adieu France, adieu France ! ' les repetant à chaque coup ; et lui dura cet exercise dolent près de cinq heures jusques qu'il commença à faire nuit, et qu'on lui demanda

Mary landed in Scotland on the 20th of August, and when we consider the distracted state of the country, and the characters of those with whom she was henceforth to be surrounded, we may easily excuse the sensations of terror and sadness with which she approached her capital. The po-

si elle ne se voulait point ôter de là et souper un peu. Alors redoublant ses pleurs plus que jamais, dit ces mots ; “ C’est bien à cette heure, ma chère France, que je vous perds du tout de vue, puisque la nuit obscure, et jalouse du contentement de vous voir tant que j’eusse pu, m’apporte un voile noir devant les yeux, pour me priver d’un tel bien. Adieu donc, ma chère France ! que je perds du tout de vue : je ne vous verrai jamais plus.” Ainsi se retira, disant qu’elle avait fait tout le contraire de Didon, qui ne fit que regarder la mer, quand Enée se departit d’avec elle, et elle regardait toujours la terre. Elle voulut se coucher sans avoir mangé, et ne voulut descendre en bas dans la chambre de poupe, mais on lui fit dresser la traverse de la galère en haut de la poupe, et lui dresser son lit. Et reposant un peu, n’oubliant nullement ses soupirs et larmes, elle commanda au timonnier, sitôt qu’il serait jour, s’il voyait et découvrirait encore le terrain de la France, qu’il l’éveillait et ne craignit de l’appeller, à quoi la fortune la favorisa ; car le vent s’étant cessé et ayant recours aux rames, on ne fit guères de chemin cette nuit ; si bien que le jour paraissant, parut encore le terrain de la France et n’ayant failli le timonnier au commandement qu’elle lui avait fait, elle se lève sur son lit et se mit à contempler la France encore tant qu’elle peut. Mais la galère s’éloignant, elle éloignait son contentement, et ne vit plus son beau terrain. Adonc redoubla encore ces mots : “ Adieu France, cela est fait ; Adieu la France ! je pense ne vous voir jamais plus !”

verty of the country struck her, who had so lately left the fertile plains of France, with a feeling of disappointment. The weather was wet and “dolorous;” and a serenade of bagpipes with which the populace hailed her, seems to have greatly disconcerted her polished attendants; but Mary took every thing in good part, and after a while she so far recovered her gaiety, that the masques and dancing, “the fiddling” and “uncomely skipping,” she introduced into Holyrood House, gave great offence to John Knox, and the rest of the grave Reformers; though they might have been forgiven, one would think, to a young and beautiful queen who was ‘brought up in joyousness.’

Mary was warmly attached to her own religion: the truth and excellence of the Reformed doctrines were not understood or appreciated by her; she was shocked by the sacrilegious destruction of the ancient cathedrals and monasteries, and disgusted by the excessive austerity of the Presbyterians; she yielded, however, to what she could not help, and her conduct in this respect is one of the disputed points already alluded to. Some historians assert, that Mary merely endured the ascendancy of the Reformed party, with the secret intention of crushing it the moment she had the power to do so, and exterminating those who adhered to it. Others, appealing to the mo-

deration she had already expressed, and to the natural kindliness of her disposition, deny the truth of this accusation.

The leading men in Scotland at this time, were Mary's natural brother, the Lord James Stuart, afterwards the Earl of Murray, a very able and accomplished man, but artful, ambitious, and devoted to the English interests; the Earl of Morton, who was of a cruel, rapacious, and factious disposition; Sir William Maitland of Lethington, the Secretary of State, a learned man and profound politician: these were of the Reformed persuasion. At the head of the Roman Catholics were Gordon Earl of Huntley, Hamilton Duke of Chatelherault, and his son the Earl of Arran. But the principal guidance of affairs rested with the Earl of Murray, to whom Mary, in the commencement of her reign, trusted implicitly: the chief power was possessed by the Reformers, and most of the members of the privy council were Protestants. Bothwell, who became afterwards so fatally conspicuous, was at this time regarded as a powerful nobleman, retaining the offices he held under the former government, but not yet regarded with favour in the court of Mary: he was a daring and violent man, as wicked as he was daring, as crafty as he was violent; coarse, and brutal in his manners, and described by a contem-

porary, as one of the ugliest men in existence. Among the foreign princes who at this time solicited the hand of the Queen of Scots, were Don Carlos, the son of Philip the Second, the Archduke Charles of Austria, and the Prince de Condé: but Mary was not inclined to marriage; she was well aware that a foreign alliance would be impolitic, displeasing to her people, and offensive to Elizabeth. Among her suitors at home, were the Earl of Arran and Sir John Gordon, but neither of these were fortunate enough to win her favour; though Sir John Gordon, (who of all her lovers is the only one who is supposed to have been attached to Mary for her own sake,) certainly captivated her attention, and, but for the interference of Murray, might possibly have won her heart.

It is observable that all the events of Mary's reign were of a domestic nature; she carried on no foreign wars, nor did she interfere with the affairs of other countries. Her personal and her political history are the same, and cannot be considered separately, as in the case of many other princes.

The first occurrence of any importance after Mary's return from France, was her expedition to the North, to put down the power of the Gordons; a powerful and warlike clan, who had risen against

the crown, or, at least, were suspected of hostile and treasonable intentions. The Queen's brother, Lord Murray, had his own reasons for being a personal enemy of the Gordons : Mary, who confided in his superior age and experience, perceived his acknowledged abilities, and had at present no reason to doubt his integrity or his devotion to her, left the management of this affair to him. She herself marched on horseback at the head of her troops, and displayed great spirit and intrepidity. A battle was fought at Corrachie near Aberdeen, between Murray and the Earl of Huntley, the chief of the Gordons, in which Huntley was defeated. On beholding the destruction of his clan and family, the unfortunate Earl fell dead from his horse without a wound ; and his son, Sir John Gordon, Mary's rejected lover, was taken prisoner, tried, condemned, and executed at Aberdeen. Murray insisted that the queen should be present at this execution, as a measure of policy, and that the public might be convinced that she gave her countenance to all these proceedings. The young queen yielded most reluctantly, but being brought to the window opposite to the scaffold, she fainted away, and could not for some time be recovered. The eldest brother of Sir John Gordon was also taken prisoner, and found guilty ; but Mary, perhaps remembering this ter-

rible scene, could never be persuaded to sign his death-warrant, and some time afterwards he was restored to favour. The court returned to Edinburgh on the 22nd of November 1562, after an absence of three months, during which time the queen visited all the principal towns and castles to the north of her capital.

Poor Chatelard, a half mad poet of that time, was executed for treason in the beginning of the year 1563. As his name has become celebrated from being associated with that of Mary, I shall add the account of him from Chalmers. “ When the queen arrived from France, there came in the train of Monsieur D’Anville,* one Chatelard, a gentleman by birth, a soldier by profession, a scholar from education, and a poet by choice.† He returned with D’Anville to France, after enjoying from the rank of his protector the various amusements of Mary’s court. In November 1562, he again visited Scotland, bringing letters from D’Anville and others to the queen. It is supposed, that the Duke employed him as the interpreter of his passion for Mary, but that Cha-

* The Duc D’Anville was second son of the famous Constable Anne Montmorenci, and one of Mary’s most ardent admirers.

† According to Brantome, Chatelard was the grand-nephew of the Chevalier Bayard, and resembled him in person.

telard, was mad enough to entertain hopes for himself, upon what grounds we cannot now judge." He proceeded the full length, on the 12th of February 1563, of concealing himself in the queen's bed-chamber, with his sword and dagger beside him. He was discovered, but the fact was concealed from the queen by her female attendants, from prudential motives, till the morning: on being made acquainted with this piece of temerity, the queen commanded Chatelard out of her sight, and banished him from the court. The queen, with a part of her train, left Edinburgh on the 13th, and slept at Dunfermling; on the 14th she proceeded to Burnt Island, where she slept. Having retired to her chamber, Chatelard followed her thither, and suddenly presented himself before her, to clear himself, as he said, from the former imputation. She ordered him to be gone; he refused; and astonished at his audacity, the queen herself was fain to cry out for help. "The Earl of Murray was sent for, when the queen in her agitation and terror called out to him to defend her, and strike his dagger into the intruder; but Murray thought proper to send him to ward, reserving this daring or infatuated miscreant to the due course of the law, which would lay open the whole transaction." He was tried at St. Andrew's, condemned to

death, and executed on the 22nd of February. He refused to avail himself of any minister or confessor, but having read aloud Ronsard's hymn on Death, he turned towards the palace, and exclaimed, "Adieu ! la plus belle et la plus cruelle Princesse du monde !" he then quietly submitted to the stroke of the executioner. As his crimes arose from a heated imagination, and a too daring admiration of the queen, we may wish that Mary had extended her mercy to him, or could have done so without drawing suspicion on herself.

It was at this time David Rizzio first rose into notice and favour ; he had arrived in 1561, in the train of the Ambassador of Savoy ; the three pages, or *songsters*, who used to sing trios before Mary, wanted a fourth as a bass, and Rizzio was recommended and appointed. Being not only the most scientific musician in the household, but likewise a good penman, well acquainted with French and Italian, supple and intelligent, Rizzio contrived to make himself generally useful, and was appointed French Secretary to Queen Mary in 1564, which office he retained till his death.

The next important event was Mary's marriage, in 1565. Two years had passed away in tranquillity, during which Mary had exerted herself to win the affection of her subjects, and propitiate the Reformers. John Knox, whose piety and integrity were unquestionable, but whose zeal was rather

violent, and betrayed at times both his judgment and his feeling as a man, treated her sometimes with severity, and confesses that he once made her weep, "so that they could scarce get handkerchiefs to hold her eyes dry," by the bitterness and insolence of his reprimands.* But on the whole, the two or three years previous to her marriage may be considered prosperous and happy. She gave four or five hours every day to state affairs: she was accustomed to have her embroidery frame placed in the room where her privy council met, and while she plied her needle, she listened to the discussions of her ministers, displaying, in her opinions and suggestions, a vigour of mind and a quickness of perception which astonished the statesmen around her; at other times she applied herself to literature, particularly poetry and history. She brought a great many books with her to Scotland; and the first artificial globes that had ever been seen there were in her library. She was exceedingly fond of music, and entertained a band of minstrels, whom

* Even on her first arrival in Scotland, and before she could have given any real or pretended cause of offence against his party, Knox, as we are told, "did knock so hastily upon her heart, that he made her to weep;" but, adds the writer (Randolph), "there be some of her sex that will do that as well for anger as for grief." Mary's tears might well have sprung from both.

she paid generously. Her other amusements were dancing, hunting, and hawking, and she was fond of walking much in the open air. A love of gardening was one of her favourite pursuits. She had brought from France a little sycamore plant, the first, according to tradition, which had ever been seen in Scotland: this she planted in the gardens of Holyrood, and from this parent stem arose the beautiful groves of sycamore which are now met with in Scotland. She did not encourage tournaments, from a horror of accidental bloodshed. She was fond of playing at chess, and excelled in it. She delighted in masques, such as were the fashion of that day, which generally exhibited some allegorical representation, with verses and music. Sir James Melville says, that “when she had leisure from the affairs of her country, she read upon good books the histories of divers countries, and sometimes would play on the lute and the virginals, reasonably for a Queen:” he adds, that “she was anxious to know and to get intelligence of the state of other countries, and would be sometimes sad when she was solitary, and glad of the company of them that had travelled to foreign parts.” To this it may be added that she rose habitually at eight, supped at seven, (supper being then the principal meal,) and went to rest at ten. She endeavoured to conciliate Elizabeth, and

the two queens made a great exhibition of courtesy and compliment and sisterly affection towards each other, though at the same time Mary, who could not easily forgive the injurious treatment she had already received from Elizabeth, regarded her with suspicion and resentment; and the English queen beheld her beautiful rival with envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

Mary, however, paid Elizabeth the compliment of consulting her on her marriage. To choose a consort pleasing to herself, agreeable to her subjects, and not likely to give umbrage to the Queen of England, appeared not only difficult, but impossible. Elizabeth proposed her favourite, Dudley, Earl of Leicester, not without some intention of offending her "good sister," but certainly without any wish or any expectation that the proposal should be acceded to. Mary was, in truth, deeply and justly affronted. The grandfather of Leicester had been one of the mean and upstart instruments of Henry the Seventh's extortion; he himself was the minion of Elizabeth, and his character universally odious. Mary refused, of course, to listen to him, and Elizabeth found something to object against every other. At length Mary cast her eyes on young Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, and though the event proved that she could not have made a more rash and fatal

choice, yet at the time many circumstances rendered it most eligible. Darnley, who was of the blood-royal, was first cousin to Mary,* and second cousin to Elizabeth: he was a Protestant. He was possessed of all external accomplishments, being remarkably tall, handsome, and graceful, "well instructed in all comely exercises," and to please Mary, he affected a degree of refinement, and a taste for music and poetry, which, in reality, he did not possess. Those vices of temper and disposition he afterwards betrayed were of course kept out of sight. The principal objection that could be made to him was his youth, for he was not more than nineteen. His mother, Lady Lennox, "a very wise and discreet matron," Rizzio, and others, instructed him in the best methods of rendering himself agreeable to the queen, in which he succeeded. They were married on the 29th July 1565, when Mary was in her 23rd year, and Darnley received from his bride the title, and many of the privileges of the King of Scotland.

For a short time Mary thought herself happy, in spite of the unreasonable displeasure of Elizabeth, and the murmurs of some of her nobility. Murray, whose power was shaken by this event, ventured to rebel openly, but was vigorously

* The Countess of Lennox, mother of Henry Lord Darnley, was half sister to James V. and first cousin to Queen Elizabeth.

opposed by the queen, and obliged to take shelter in England. However, before many weeks were past, Mary began to repent of her imprudent marriage. Darnley was a headstrong, conceited boy, whose head was turned by his exaltation. He was indeed the husband of the queen, but she was by birth and law his sovereign, to whom he owed in public all external marks of duty and respect. As a woman, who had freely bestowed on him that favour for which the greatest princes of Europe had sued in vain, he owed to her unbounded love and gratitude. But Mary's tenderness and merit were equally thrown away upon him, and instead of respect, devotion, and gratitude, she met with neglect, brutality, and insolence. Among his other vices he was addicted to drinking, and within four months after his marriage, "at an entertainment in a merchant's house in Edinburgh, she only dissuading him from drinking too much himself and enticing others, in both which he proceeded, he gave her such words, that she left the place with tears."* Darnley bore the title of King, but this did not satisfy him; he wished to have all the power and privileges which had been conferred on Francis by the Scottish Parliament, "the crown matrimonial," as it was termed; and less would not content him. But as his temper and character became better

* See Randolph's letters.

known to Mary, she felt a natural disinclination to intrust him with farther power ; and in this resistance she was confirmed by the advice of her secretary, David Rizzio.

The young King, who could not endure contradiction, was loud in his discontent, sullen and insolent in his demeanour, and threw out various threats against Rizzio. Several noblemen, at the head of whom was the Earl of Morton, already mentioned, encouraged and exasperated him still more for their own selfish views : the removal of Rizzio, and an utter breach between the queen and her husband, were precisely what they most wished for ; and a conspiracy was formed so dark and daring in its contrivance, and so atrocious in its object, that we cannot think of it without astonishment, pity, and horror. It was resolved to assassinate Rizzio ; and among the ruffians who undertook to perpetrate this deed, in the very presence of a woman and their queen, were the King her husband, the Lord Chancellor (Morton), the Justice General of the Kingdom, and several Lords of the Privy Council—what a picture of barbarism ! The details of the murder of Rizzio are well known. On the 9th of March 1566, while sitting at supper with the Queen and some other ladies, he was attacked by the conspirators, stabbed over Mary's shoulder, who attempted to defend

him, then dragged out of the room and despatched at the head of the staircase. Mary was kept locked up in her chamber (where this horrible scene had taken place) the whole night; even her women were not allowed to approach her; but the next day, which was Sunday, Darnley came to her; he could not stand in her presence without feeling some remorse and fear, and Mary, who was ignorant of the whole extent of his guilt, employed all her eloquence to induce him to forsake the desperate men with whom he was leagued, and escape with her; he consented, and they fled together to Dunbar.

The wrongs and insult which had been offered to Mary were so apparent, that she was soon at the head of a powerful army; she consented to pardon Murray and Argyle, but the cruel and perfidious Morton, and the two barbarians, Ruthven and Lindsay, who were among the immediate perpetrators of Rizzio's murder, she threatened with the extremity of her vengeance; they fled to England, always the safe asylum of Mary's enemies, and remained there in safety for some months, till her resentment began to wear away, and other objects ingrossed her attention and her feelings.

In June 1566, Mary gave birth to a son, in the Castle of Edinburgh, whither she had retired

with her husband and her brother, Lord Murray, for the sake of quiet and safety. After her recovery she made a short progress through the country for the benefit of her health, accompanied by the King and her infant son; but though generally together, Mary and her husband were not on good terms; he had deeply disgusted her, and had incurred general contempt and odium by the weakness and ill temper he displayed on every occasion.

It was at this time that Bothwell—the restless, ambitious, dissolute, and daring Bothwell, found favour at court. His character was well known, but through all these troubles, and amid all the treasons and treachery of those who surrounded her, he had remained faithful to Mary's interests. With regard to the two principal imputations against her, first, of having regarded Bothwell with stronger feelings of approbation than as a virtuous woman she ought to have done; secondly, of having participated in his subsequent crimes, and conspired with him the death of her husband:—these are points, on which historians have set forth a mass of contradictory evidence. Some consider her as deeply stained with guilt, tempting at once, and tempted; others have pronounced her the helpless victim of a dark, cruel, and designing man. But to return to well-known and undisputed facts: soon after the birth of her son, the general as-

sembly of the Kirk sent a deputation to the Queen, praying that she would be graciously pleased to allow the young Prince to be educated in the Reformed Faith. To have acceded to this request would have been against her conscience; to refuse it, was perilous. Mary released herself from this dilemma with that grace and woman's wit for which she was remarkable; she replied to the deputies benignly, but without making any definite promise, and calling for her son, she placed him herself in the arms of their spokesman: the grave minister, unable to withstand so much sweetness, pronounced over the infant a prayer for its future prosperity, and at the conclusion won from it a kind of indistinct murmur, which the good man interpreted into an "Amen." The Queen, amused by this scene, and gratified in her maternal feelings, loaded the minister with thanks and expressions of the kindest import, playfully styling him "Mr. Amen," by which name he was afterwards known. The baptism of the infant Prince took place at Stirling, on the 19th of December 1566. Elizabeth, notwithstanding her envious and repining exclamation, that "the Queen of Scots should be mother of a fair son while she was only a barren stock,"—stood godmother, and despatched the Earl of Bedford as her ambassador on this occasion, while she deputed the Countess of Argyle to officiate as her proxy. She also presented a

font of gold to her godson, with a letter full of congratulations and compliments to his mother.

The conduct of Darnley meanwhile was so offensive and grievous to his Queen, and she was so distracted by the turbulent passions and the discontent of those around her, partly excited by his ill behaviour, that in the midst of the splendid rejoicings and festivities which accompanied the christening of her son, she was often seen in tears, and was heard to wish herself dead. She would not, however, consent to be divorced from Darnley, though a divorce was urged, not by Bothwell only, but by her brother Lord Murray, the Earl of Huntley, Maitland, and others of her counsellors. A fear of the consequences to her son, and a feminine horror against the expedient altogether, seem to have been felt by her, or at least were strongly expressed in her decided reply to her counsellors; "I will that you do nothing by which any spot may be laid on my honour and conscience, and therefore, I pray ye let the matter be in the estate that it is abiding, till God of his goodness put a remedy to it. That which you believe would do me a service may possibly turn to my hurt and displeasure."

Finding the Queen immovable on this point, Bothwell, whose object it was to make himself master of her and of the Government, decided on the murder of Darnley: he was then recovering

from the small-pox, and lodged for the benefit of the air in a house, called the Kirk-of-field, near Edinburgh. Mary was a great deal with him during his convalescence. Subdued by illness, and removed from his evil counsellors, Darnley was no longer peevish, wayward, or violent, but penitent and grateful for kindness; and Mary, in whose facile mind enmity and hatred were ever short-lived, appeared touched by the condition of him, "her life so late and sole delight," and treated him with tenderness. She sometimes brought her band of musicians up from Holyrood House to amuse him. But on Sunday, the 9th of February, a day fatally memorable in the history of Mary, after having visited him as usual, she left him to be present at an entertainment given at the palace of Holyrood, to celebrate the marriage of her French servant Sebastian with Margaret Carwood, one of her ladies in waiting. While engaged in these festivities, the house in which her husband slept was blown up with gunpowder, and his body and that of his servant were found in a garden at some distance. He perished in his twenty-first year, having reigned only eighteen months. Of the grief and horror which Mary displayed on this occasion it is not necessary to speak; evidently, however, she felt more horror than grief, and considering how little reason she had to regret Darnley, it is something in favour

of her sincerity, that she did not seem to *act* a part, but recovered herself quickly, and resumed all her self-possession.

So many circumstances conspired to fix suspicion on the Earl of Bothwell, that he was brought to trial on the accusation of the Earl of Lennox, the father of the murdered king. But the trial was fixed for an early day, the proceedings hurried over; Lennox himself, pleading the shortness of the time, did not appear against him; and Bothwell, in the absence of his legal accuser, was acquitted by a jury composed of the first noblemen in the kingdom.

Bothwell's next object was to marry the Queen, and the steps taken for this purpose, if with Mary's consent, were as incomprehensible and apparently unnecessary, as they were unpardonable; if taken without her participation, and contrary to her will, the expedients resorted to were so base and villainous, that they cannot even be glanced at without horror. The Queen, we are told, was returning from Stirling Castle, towards Edinburgh, with a small retinue, when Bothwell, at the head of 1000 armed men, encountered her on Fountain Bridge, about a mile from Linlithgow, seized the reins of her horse, and carried her, without any resistance, to the Castle of Dunbar, where he kept her closely "sequestered" for a fortnight; during the first week, her own

servants had not access to her. During the second week, a privy council was called, attended by two or three nobles devoted to Bothwell. He had previously contrived to have a bond signed by one archbishop, four bishops, and sixteen of the most distinguished noblemen and statesmen of the time, in which he was recommended to the Queen as a fit and proper husband for her Majesty; the subscribers to this infamous bond obliged themselves by oath, "to advance and set forward such marriage by word and deed, and to consider as a common enemy whoever should oppose it." Armed with this document, and having procured with disgraceful celerity a divorce from his wife, Lady Jane Gordon,—Bothwell brought the Queen back to Edinburgh on the 3rd of May; and on the 15th of May this guilty and fatal marriage was solemnised.

If Mary had been disgusted by the coarse vices of Darnley, what must she not have suffered, when she found herself in the power of the ruffian Bothwell? She passed but one month with him, and this month is usually considered as the most miserable of her miserable life. He treated her with such indignity, that a day did not pass in which "he did not cause her to shed abundance of salt tears." He surrounded her with a guard, so that none of her movements could be said to be voluntary; and once, in a paroxysm of passion

and despair, she threatened her own life. Those very Lords who had signed the bond already mentioned in his favour, now made this marriage a pretence for rebellion, but still without breathing a syllable that could cast an imputation on Mary. A party, at the head of which was the Earl of Morton, with the ostensible purpose of delivering their "Sovereign Lady's most noble person" from the power of Bothwell, (for she was not at this time accused of having placed herself willingly in his hands,) had assembled at Stirling. Bothwell on his part called his followers together in the Queen's name, and the two factions met at Carberry Hill. Here a negotiation was entered into, for both parties seemed averse to an immediate engagement, and Mary took a very unexpected and decisive step. She agreed at once to dismiss Bothwell, and place herself in the hands of the adverse party, if they would be answerable for her safety and return to their allegiance: this was agreed to; she persuaded Bothwell to ride off the field, and he retired to Dunbar. They never met again; and thus, in less than a month, this disgraceful union was virtually ended: its fatal consequences terminated not so soon—*they* only ended with the life of Mary.

The noblemen, to whose loyalty Mary had trusted her safety and her person, brought her to Edinburgh, where she was received with insults



instead of honour. A ghastly banner was displayed before her, on which was depicted the body of the murdered Darnley, and the young prince kneeling by his side—with this legend, “Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord.” Faint, weary, terrified, covered with dust and bathed in tears, she was thus led through the town to the Provost’s house. After being kept in constraint for a few days, the lords, who feared that the populace would rise in her favour, conveyed her forcibly to the castle of Lochleven, where she was kept a close prisoner, without any of the attendance befitting her rank. This, her first captivity, took place in June 1567.

While Mary was shut up in the castle of Lochleven, the rebel lords extorted from her a formal abdication of the crown, in favour of her infant son. The unhappy queen signed this paper in a paroxysm of tears, exclaiming against the violence used towards her, and calling all present to witness that it was done in fear of her life, and therefore not valid. It appears, that at this time she did not believe her brother, Lord Murray, so deeply implicated in the plots against her as he really was; for, with a fond confidence, which, if Murray had a heart, must have wrung it to its core, she flung her arms round him, pressed him to her bosom, and entreated him to take on himself the Regency, “for the protection of her son,



until she should be liberated." This was the end and aim of all Murray's machinations : he left his sister, deceived for the present, was immediately proclaimed Regent during the minority of the young king, and Mary was declared to have forfeited all right and title to the throne. Eleven months were passed by Mary in close confinement, under the particular custody of Lady Margaret Douglas, styled in those times "the Lady of Lochleven;" and her captivity was farther embittered by the stern and harsh temper of this woman, who had motives for private and personal irritation against her prisoner. But the second son of Lady Margaret, and a young boy of about fifteen, who was called *little William Douglas*, could not behold the misfortunes of Mary without pity and sympathy, and resolved to undertake her deliverance. The first attempt failed through the carelessness of the queen herself. She had succeeded in leaving the castle in the disguise of a laundress, with whom she had changed clothes, and when seated in the boat which was pushing from the shore, she betrayed herself by lifting her hand to her head. The beauty and extreme whiteness of that hand discovered her at once, and she was carried back to her chamber, in tears and bitterness of heart. The next attempt was more successful. At midnight, on the 3rd of May 1568, William Douglas contrived to possess himself of

the keys of the portal; a small skiff was in waiting under the walls of the castle: in this he placed the queen and her maid, Jane Kennedy, and rowed across the lake to the opposite shore, where George Douglas and a few faithful friends were waiting to receive them. The queen was then mounted on a swift horse and brought to Niddry, the house of Lord Seaton, where she took some repose, and was thence brought to Hamilton, her friends and followers increasing every hour. The strongest enthusiasm was excited in her favour. Many nobles of the highest distinction for rank and character crowded to her standard, and in three days after her escape from the solitary towers of Lochleven, she found herself at the head of six thousand men devoted to her cause.

Hamilton not being fortified, her partisans resolved to convey her to the castle of Dumbarton, a place of strength, where she would be in safety from her enemies, and accordingly they commenced their march northwards.

In the mean time the Regent Murray had assembled his troops at Glasgow, and hastened to oppose her; and when we consider that Murray was the brother of Mary; that she had loaded him with benefits and honours, and twice pardoned him for treason against herself; and that on this occasion he was pursuing the destruction of the mo-

ther, in the name and under the banners of her own son, it is scarcely possible to conceive any thing more frightful and unnatural than such a state of things. The two armies met at Langside, a little village to the south of Glasgow. The queen wished to avoid an engagement, but the headlong impatience and enthusiasm of her adherents were not to be restrained, and the mortal strife began. From a neighbouring eminence Mary viewed the vicissitudes of a battle on which her fate depended. She beheld,—with what anguish of heart we may imagine,—the fortune of the day turn against her ; she saw, through blinding tears, her faithful friends cut to pieces, taken prisoners, or flying before the victorious Murray. When all was indeed lost, her general, Lord Herries, came up to her, seized her bridle, and turned her horse's head from the dismal scene. They fled southwards, with a few adherents, nor stayed nor reposed till they had reached Dundrennan, sixty miles from the field of battle.

There Mary, trusting in Elizabeth's late professions of attachment, took the fatal resolution of passing into England, to throw herself upon the compassion and protection of the English queen ; and such protection she found indeed as the wolf affords the lamb which has strayed into his den ; such pity as the dove, escaped “ with plumage all

impaired" from the talons of the hawk, finds within the snares of the watchful fowler. It was on Sunday the 13th of May 1568, that the Queen of Scots quitted, for the last time, her own dominions, and landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and though she was received with great show of respect, and treated with the honours due to her rank, by the gentlemen residing near the borders, yet from that moment may be dated her long and sorrowful captivity of nearly nineteen years.

When Mary arrived in England, her retinue consisted of about twenty persons, among whom were Lesley, Bishop of Ross, an excellent prelate, and an accomplished man; the good Lord Herries, Lord Livingstone, and Lord Fleming; her deliverers George and William Douglas, two secretaries, Sebastian the Frenchman, and his wife; Ladies Livingstone and Fleming; and Mary Seaton, the only one of the original Maries who survived to her. All these, with the exception of the two secretaries, remained true and attached to her till death. She was at this time in her twenty-sixth year, in the very prime of existence, in the full bloom of her beauty and her health, when a dark pall was flung over her life. Thenceforward Mary's history presents one painful picture of monotonous suffering on the one hand, of meanness, treachery, and cruelty on the other. Elizabeth, with relentless

and perfidious policy, kept her rival in perpetual bonds ; the only changes were from prison to prison, and from one harsh keeper to another, from the gleam of a delusive hope to the tenfold darkness of succeeding disappointment.

Elizabeth arrogated to herself the right of deciding between Mary and her Scottish subjects. A Conference met at York, in which the Queen of Scotland and the Queen of England were represented by their respective commissioners, and the Regent Murray appeared in person. In this conference Murray and his confederates accused Mary of participating in the murder of her husband, and of other monstrous crimes, which rendered her not only unfit to govern, but unfit to live ; and they produced as proofs of her guilt certain letters said to have passed between the queen and Bothwell. The commissioners of the Queen of Scots, acting from her written instructions, repelled these accusations, declared the letters to be forgeries, and formally accused Murray, Morton, and the rest, of high treason and scandal against their sovereign. This famous Conference, by the artful management of Elizabeth, closed without coming to any decision ; and as Lord Murray had been permitted to return to Scotland, Mary required that she also should be set at liberty, as there could be no longer the slightest pretence for keep-

ing her under restraint. In answer, it was intimated, that if she would voluntarily confirm her forced abdication and renounce her throne and kingdom, she should be permitted to reside in quiet and privacy in England. "The eyes of all Europe," replied Mary with her usual spirit, "are upon me at this moment; and were I thus tamely to yield to my adversaries, I should be pronouncing my own condemnation. A thousand times rather would I submit to death than inflict this stain upon my honour. The last words I speak shall be those of the Queen of Scotland."

Thus refusing her liberty on these conditions, she remained a captive. In 1569 she was removed from Bolton to the Castle of Tutbury, in Staffordshire, and placed in the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury and his wife, the famous "Bess of Hardwicke," a woman of penurious and rapacious character, and of a most violent and jealous temper. Both were honourable, but most strict and watchful guardians, and great fears were obviously entertained of the power of Mary's charms over those who were suffered to approach her. "If I might give advice, (writes one of the statesmen who saw her at this time,) there should be very few subjects of this land have access to a conference with this lady; for besides that she is a goodly personage, (and yet in truth not com-

parable to our sovereign,) she hath withal an alluring grace, a pretty Scotch speech, and a searching wit, clouded with mildness. Fame might move some to relieve her; and glory, joined to gain, might stir others to adventure much for her sake." The advice contained in this letter was too acceptable not to be followed, and every succeeding year found Mary reduced in society, comforts, and health. Her principal occupation was needlework, and her amusements reading and composition; she retained her early love of literature, and it was now, next to her religious feelings and hopes, her best resource. The unvarying mildness, and saint-like patience, with which Mary endured her long captivity, is the more remarkable, if we remember that she was disinclined to sedentary amusements, and by nature and habit, fond of walking, riding, gardening, hunting, and hawking, and all exercises in the open air. Her gentleness, therefore, under a restraint so painful and so heart-wearing, may be considered as a proof of singular sweetness of temper and strength of mind, if we must not admit it as a proof of a clear and tranquil conscience. One of Cecil's emissaries, who visited her at Tutbury, with wondrous impudence and hypocrisy, recommended to her "to thank God, that, after so many perils, she had arrived in a realm where, through the goodness of

Queen Elizabeth's majesty, she had rather cause to regard herself as receiving prince-like entertainment, than as suffering the slightest restraint." To which Mary replied meekly, "That indeed she had great cause to be thankful to heaven and to her good sister for such ease as she enjoyed; and that though she would not pretend to ask of God contentment in a state of captivity, she made it her daily petition that he would endue her with patience to endure it." *

Ronsard, the French poet, who had known, admired, and celebrated her when she was young, addressed a book of verses to her in her captivity. In many of these poems there is much beauty and deep feeling; and Mary, who received this tribute with gratitude and pleasure, at a time when she seemed to have fallen into total oblivion, and all the world appeared to have forsaken her but this generous poet, sent him from her prison 2000 crowns and a silver vase from her toilet, on which she had written,

"A Ronsard, l'Apollon de la source des Muses."

There was also another, who, from motives less generous and unselfish, was deeply interested in the fate of Mary. This was the unfortunate Duke of Norfolk, who, impelled by mingled motives,—

* Letter of Nicholas Whyte.

by personal ambition, by his religious feelings or prejudices, by his admiration and pity for the imprisoned queen,—engaged himself in various plots for her deliverance, which ended in his own destruction. Norfolk, though generous and brave, appears to have been a weak man. He had not sufficient talent or strength of character to play the daring part assigned to him. He vacillated,—would have been great, “but was too full o’ the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way.” He was betrayed by one of his own servants, tried for high treason, condemned, and executed. When the news of his arraignment and condemnation was brought to Sheffield Castle where Mary then resided, she abandoned herself to grief, and wept most bitterly, exclaiming that “all who had ever loved her, fared the worse for her sake.” Lady Shrewsbury, by way of comfort, argued that the Duke was justly condemned; on which Mary gave way to a fresh burst of sorrow; but would talk no more on the subject, and refused to leave her chamber for a week.*

Elizabeth, though anxious to implicate Mary in all the guilt of Norfolk, could not succeed in fixing any imputation on her beyond that of seizing with avidity any means which offered for her

* Vide Letter from Sir Ralph Sadler to Lord Burleigh, in Ellis’s collection, v. ii. p. 329.

deliverance from a hateful captivity. This Mary freely acknowledged ; but as to being privy to any plot against the life or throne of Elizabeth, she constantly and strenuously denied every intention of the kind.

Apparently the health of Mary declined, from the want of exercise and the dampness of the prisons in which she was confined ; she suffered, too, from constant pain in her side, and rheumatism and weakness in her limbs.* From Tutbury, where she spent, with few changes, nearly sixteen years, she was removed to Chartley, under the care of Sir Amias Paulet and Sir Drue Drury ; and thence to Fotheringay, whither she was carried in 1586.

But where, during this long period of suffering, was the only son of Mary ;—he, who in duty and affection should have stood forward to protect and defend her ? To her other sorrows was added his coldness, his ingratitude, and his undutifulness ; and it was the most bitter of all. He had been brought up to contemn and detest his mother ; to regard her with selfish fear, as one who

* “To this state of suffering and disease we must add, that the economy of Elizabeth did not permit to her who had once been a queen, the accommodations which are furnished in modern hospitals to invalids of the meanest order.”—Vide Sir Walter Scott’s *History of Scotland*, ii. 267.

might deprive him of his throne ; and when Mary sent him a present of a vest embroidered with her own hands, accompanied by a tender letter, and some jewels which remained in her possession, all were returned to her with disdain, and the messenger refused even an audience, because his mother, never having relinquished her own rights, addressed him as the *Prince*, and not as the King of Scotland.*

Her chief enemies all passed away from the earth during her long imprisonment, and, if it had been in her nature, she might have rejoiced to see that each found a fitting doom. The crafty and relentless Murray was assassinated with vengeful and cunning ferocity, by one who had received a private injury, not from Murray himself, but one of his followers. The fierce and cruel Morton perished on a scaffold ; the acute, subtle, and accomplished Maitland ended all his politic intrigues with self-murder, — he poisoned himself ; and Bothwell, that fiend in human shape, after being hunted as an outlaw from place to

* It is even said that when Courcelles, the French minister at the Scottish Court, endeavoured to rouse James to some vigorous measure for his mother's safety, he replied with a coarseness and a calmness equally characteristic, "that as she brewed, she must drink." Bethune. (See Miss Benger's life of Mary. ii. p. 450.)

place, became a pirate on the North Seas; was taken prisoner, thrown into a dungeon in the castle of Malmoe in Norway, where, after ten years' misery, he died in a state of mental derangement, forsaken, detested, and even forgotten, by all.

During sixteen years, no plots had been formed against Elizabeth in which Mary was not supposed to be implicated; in fact, while she existed, Elizabeth was stretched upon the rack of fear and suspicion, and even went the length of tampering with some of her officers to induce them to assassinate Mary: this is, unhappily, proved beyond dispute. At last, an infamous law was made by the English Parliament for the purpose of entrapping her, and which declared, not only the conspirators themselves, but those persons (however innocent or ignorant of their purpose) in whose cause they conspired, as equally guilty of treason: a law of such barefaced injustice, we can but wonder that an English Parliament should be found to promulgate it. By this law was Mary tried, as consenting to Babington's plot, in 1586; and by this law was she condemned, by a bench of judges, consisting of twenty-eight English Peers, and seventeen other persons, illustrious either by birth or office, and "all honourable men." Notwithstanding her admirable defence, in which, though broken in health and spirits, she exhibited as

much vigour and dignity of mind, and acuteness of intellect, as she had ever displayed when in possession of youth, health, and power, a sentence, universally acknowledged to be unjust and iniquitous, was pronounced against her, and but three months were suffered to elapse between the verdict and the execution. Elizabeth was anxious to ascertain how far she might proceed with safety to herself; and finding that all those who were most bound to befriend, to protect, or to avenge Mary, were too much engrossed by their own selfish interests to stir in her behalf, she hesitated no longer.

On Tuesday the 7th of February, 1587, the warrant for the death of the Queen of Scots was brought down to Fotheringay, by the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, who were commissioned to see it put into execution. In the afternoon of that day it was intimated to her, for the first time, that she was to die the next morning; her attendants burst into lamentations, and she appeared herself a little surprised at the suddenness of the news, and the short time allowed her for preparation. She, however, very calmly expressed her submission to the will of God, and her readiness to die, at the same time protesting most solemnly against the justice of her sentence. The moment the two Earls withdrew, she fell on her knees and

thanked God “that her sufferings were now so near an end, and prayed that she might be enabled to endure what yet remained with decency and with fortitude.” She afterwards spent great part of the night in arranging her affairs, and making her last will, which is still extant, and consists of four pages, closely written, in a neat and firm hand. Not one person was forgotten who had any claims on her gratitude or her remembrance; she also wrote several letters, but these, it is said, are blotted with her tears. She supped with cheerfulness, and drank to her attendants in a last cup of wine, who pledged her on their knees, and bathed in tears. She then went to bed, and either slept, or seemed to sleep, for a few hours. Next morning, at eight o’clock, all was ready, and Mary, after spending some time in fervent devotion, descended to the hall in which the scaffold was prepared. She was in full dress, habited in a robe of black silk, bordered with crimson velvet, and a long veil of white crape, edged with lace; she wore a rich chain round her neck, and held in her hand a small ivory crucifix. She walked into the hall, leaning on the arm of her physician Bourgoigne, and took her seat, while the Dean of Peterborough began a long exhortation, to which she paid little attention, praying aloud, and according to the

forms of her own church. She requested that some of her female attendants might be allowed to perform the last offices about her person. This was at first refused; but she represented so earnestly the indignity and indelicacy of suffering her to die surrounded by men only, that at length they consented for very shame. Two of her maids unrobed her: as she had answered for their self-possession, they restrained their cries and tears, but trembled so violently that they could scarcely stand. Mary remained perfectly calm; her colour did not change, her voice did not falter; there was no defiance or effort in her deportment, but the utmost modesty and meekness, united to the utmost firmness. When she had finished her devotions, in which she prayed audibly for Elizabeth, she quietly prepared for death. Jane Kennedy (who was still with her) performed the last sad office of binding her eyes; she then laid her head upon the block, saying, with a firm voice, "O Lord, in thee have I hoped, and into thy hands I commit myself!" One of the executioners, a barbarian well chosen for such a purpose, performed his office;—the other lifted up the severed head by the hair, and cried out "God save Elizabeth, Queen of England!"—the Earl of Kent and the Dean of Peterborough responded, "Thus perish all her enemies!"—the rest of the spectators, over-

come with horror, pity, and admiration, remained silent, and drowned in tears.

Mary Stuart perished at the age of forty-four years and two months, and in the nineteenth year of her sad captivity. Her life had been most unfortunate; her death, though tragical, can hardly be called *unfortunate*, since it removed her from a state of suffering to a better world; and since the piety, fortitude, and sublime resignation she displayed on this occasion, have furnished her defenders with one strong presumptive proof of her general innocence.

Her remains were taken from her weeping servants, and a green cloth, torn in haste from an old billiard-table, was flung over her once beautiful form: thus it remained, unwatched and unattended, except by a poor little lap-dog, which could not be induced to quit the body of its mistress.* After the lapse of a few days, she was interred, by Elizabeth's order, in the cathedral of Peterborough; and on the accession of her son to the English crown, as James I., her remains were brought to Westminster-abbey, where they repose among the sovereigns of her race.

* This faithful little animal was found dead two days afterwards; and the circumstance made such an impression, even on the hard-hearted ministers of Elizabeth, that it was mentioned in the official dispatches.

The striking similarity between the character and fate of Mary of Scotland and Joanna of Naples, has frequently been alluded to; but the parallel has never, I believe, been closely and regularly drawn, and it presents a series of very curious coincidences.

Both were from their birth destined to a throne—both were called to reign in early youth;—both were highly and equally gifted by Nature, in mind and in person;—both beautiful, and even resembling each other in the character of beauty attributed to each;—both were remarkable for a love of pleasure, a taste for magnificence, and an early predilection for literature and learned men. If Mary was the most accomplished of the two, it was because she lived in more favourable times, and her education took place under more favourable auspices. She loved poetry, and patronised Ronsard, the best poet of his time. The court of Joanna was graced by Petrarch, one of the greatest poets of any age. Joanna left many monuments of her splendid taste; for she had enjoyed, in the midst of tumults and reverses, some intervals of tranquillity, and reigned thirty years. Mary's short and unquiet reign did not permit her to leave any lasting memorials of her splendour or her beneficence, and what she might or would have done must be left to conjecture.

Mary and Joanna were both married in their infancy, and without their own choice, to men far inferior to themselves, both in mental powers and personal accomplishments. Andreas of Hungary was brought to Naples to be educated with his future bride; and Mary was sent to Paris to be educated with her future husband. According to some historians, Andreas appears to have greatly resembled Francis in his disposition: they describe him as timid, deficient in intellect, but good-natured and affectionate: according to other writers, he united all the deficiencies of Francis to all the vices of Darnley. Both queens have been accused as accessory to a husband's murder, under circumstances nearly similar, and on very uncertain and contradictory evidence. The marriage of Joanna with Louis of Taranto, who had been suspected of conspiracy against her former husband, had nearly proved as fatal in its consequences as Mary's union with Bothwell, and exposed her to the same dishonourable imputations. The marriage of Joanna with Louis caused a rebellion among her subjects, and her own banishment from her kingdom for several years: Mary's precipitate union with Bothwell likewise gave her subjects an excuse for rebellion, and banished her from her kingdom for ever.

Louis of Hungary, with his open violence and

secret treachery, his ceaseless machinations and deadly irreconcilable hatred, played the same part in the history of Joanna that Elizabeth enacted in that of Mary. There is reason to imagine that the idea of the black banner, painted with the murder of Darnley, which Mary's rebel subjects paraded before her eyes at Carberry Hill, was suggested by the terrific banner of the King of Hungary, borne before him when he invaded Naples, and on which was represented the murder of Andreas: the coincidence would otherwise be almost incredible.

The state of Naples in the reign of Joanna, the power and ferocity of the feudal barons, the uncivilized condition and factious spirit of the populace, remind us strongly of the situation of Scotland when Mary succeeded to her hereditary crown; and both Joanna and Mary, as women, appear to have been strangely misplaced in the barbarous times in which they lived. Mary, a queen, in her own capital, saw David Rizzio stabbed almost before her eyes, powerless to save him. Joanna, in her own palace, beheld her seneschal, her nurse Philippa, and her friend Sancha, dragged from her side to perish in tortures;—in both instances, it happened that these circumstances of horror took place when Mary and Joanna were each on the point of becoming a mother; in both

instances their condition, their entreaties, and their tears, failed to procure either forbearance or compassion from the savages who outraged them.

But by far the most striking coincidence, is the similarity in character, conduct, and fate, between the Earl of Murray and Charles of Durazzo; both were remarkable for talents and accomplishments, equally skilled in war, in policy, and intrigue; both were valiant, crafty, ambitious. Murray was the brother of Queen Mary; had been distinguished by her with boundless confidence and affection, and in the beginning of her reign had been loaded with benefits, and promoted to offices of the highest trust and power. Joanna had taken Charles of Durazzo under her protection when an orphan, had adopted and cherished him as a son, and married him to her heiress. Murray plotted with Elizabeth to dethrone his sister and sovereign, and built his power on her ruin;—Durazzo, with treachery and ingratitude yet more flagitious and detestable, joined with Louis of Hungary, and first dethroned, then murdered his benefactress. Within a short time afterwards, Durazzo was himself murdered by a woman; and Murray, within a few years after his accession to power, perished, if not by the hand or act of a woman, yet the wrongs of a woman inspired and armed his assassin.

Both Mary and Joanna owed their chief troubles and final ruin to a religious schism; they both refused in their latter years to purchase freedom and life by relinquishing their regal dignity; both died in prison, and by violence. The imprisonment of Mary was long and cruel, and a sore trial of her fortitude. On the other hand, the captivity of Joanna was short, but her death horrible to the imagination,—mysterious, frightful, unseen, unpitied, and executed by vile hands. She perished as a victim; Mary, like a martyr: by vile hands indeed, and viler practice; but with friendly hearts near her, and all Europe looking on to admire, to applaud, and to bewail her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

BEFORE we enter on the reign and character of Elizabeth, it is proper to say a few words of her sister and predecessor Mary, who governed England as sovereign in her own right during five years, that is from 1553 to 1558.

Mary Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Catherine of Arragon, succeeded to the throne on the death of her amiable brother Edward VI. The innocent and accomplished Lady Jane Grey had borne the empty title of Queen of England for ten days only, and expiated that involuntary and short-lived exaltation by a violent death at the age of seventeen. Mary was in her 39th year when she ascended the throne. Her reign presents a dark and repulsive page in our history, a series of conspiracies, factions, executions, domestic miseries, and national disgraces. Her character was

like her Government, gloomy, tyrannical, and sanguinary. We are told of the “sweet uses of adversity;” but the effect of adversity on Mary’s mind was to harden and embitter a disposition naturally reserved and haughty. The persecutions and vexations she had endured in the reigns of her father and brother, on account of her adherence to the Romish faith, had taught her to vex and to persecute others. Her sour temper rendered her one of the most unhappy princesses that ever lived, for she was unhappy within herself, as well as from external mortifications and reverses; and her whole life seems to present the lingering torment of a sullen, jealous, irritable disposition, for ever preying on itself. The picture of atrocious cruelty and suffering exhibited by the martyrdoms of her reign is unrelieved, except by a sense of painful interest, and admiration for the sufferers who died with such sublime fortitude; but as they endured torments, so did Mary inflict them,—*for conscience’ sake*. This wretched woman was rather the perverted instrument of evil, than evil in herself; what she perpetrated, was not in fear or revenge, or from any personal motives; but from blinded zeal, and the idea that she was acting for the glory of God and religion. She executed these barbarities with such a frightful cool-

ness and unconsciousness, that we regard her with the same kind of horror with which we look on some passive engine of torture,—some wooden rack or wheel stained with innocent blood. Mary, though a remorseless bigot, was not in her nature a wicked woman; she had strong affections, she had uprightness of purpose, and a high sense of her own and the nation's honour.

The principal events of her short reign, were, the burning of the Bishops Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and about two hundred others—scenes on which we will not dwell, for we may thank God that in these more enlightened times, such agonising details are no longer necessary either as example or warning;—the Queen's marriage with Philip II. of Spain, whom she deeply loved, and who in return neglected and despised her; and the loss of Calais. This town, the last of the English possessions in France, was taken from us in her reign by the famous Duc de Guise, and Mary never recovered this stain on the national honour. She died broken-hearted, leaving a name linked with the most horrible associations, and doomed to bear through future ages the most frightful cognomen ever bestowed by vulgar hatred, or deserved by human guilt,—that of **BLOODY MARY!**

Far different were the destinies of her renowned sister ;—she, who was prosperous in her life, and since her death, has been exalted by historical flattery, and consecrated to popular veneration, as “GOOD QUEEN BESS.”

Elizabeth Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Ann Boleyn, was born at Greenwich in 1533, she ascended the throne of England in 1558, being then in her 25th year, and died in 1603, after a reign of forty-four years and some months ; comprising an era of unexampled interest, not only in the history of nations, but in the history of the human intellect. It was an age, in some respects, resembling our own ; a period not only fertile in great events, but in great men ; it was the age of heroism and genius, of wonderful mental activity, extraordinary changes, and daring enterprises, of fierce struggles for religious or political freedom. It produced a Shakspeare, the first of poets ; Bacon, the great philosopher ; Hooker, the great divine ; Drake, the great seaman, and the first of our circumnavigators ; Gresham, the great merchant ; and Sydney, noblest of courtiers ; and Spenser, and Raleigh, and Essex, names renowned in history and song. In other countries, we find Luther, the Reformer ; and Sully the statesman ; Ariosto and Tasso ; Cervantes and Camöens ; Michel Angelo, Titian, and

Correggio ; Palestrina, the father of Italian music ; all these, and many other famous men never since surpassed were nearly contemporary ; it was an age of greatness, and our Elizabeth was great and illustrious in connexion with it.

To separate the personal from the political history of Elizabeth, would not be difficult ; but it would give a very unjust and imperfect idea of her character. The political events of her reign were of that magnitude and importance, that to give a distinct and intelligible account of them would require not pages but volumes ; while merely to mention them in the order in which they occurred, would convey no *new* information to the readers of this little book. It is supposed that they have already obtained from those histories of England which are generally read at an early age, a knowledge of the chief events of Elizabeth's life, and the striking points in her character. Almost from our infancy, we have a general impression that her reign is distinguished as one of the most memorable in history ; and, at a later period, we hear of the " Elizabethan age," as equally illustrious in the annals of our literature. Her wisdom, her courage, her prudence, and her patriotism ; her unconquerable spirit, her excellent laws and vigilant government ; her successes at home and abroad, her wars and her alliances with the greatest and

most powerful princes of her time ; the magnificent position which England maintained in her reign, as the strong hold of the Reformed religion ; her own grandeur as the guardian of the Protestants, and the arbitress of Europe ; her magnanimous stand in defence of the national faith and independence, when the Spanish Armada was defeated in 1588 ; the long list of great men, warriors, statesmen, and poets, who sustained her throne, who graced her court, obeyed her slightest word, lived in her smiles, and “ worshiped as she passed ;” all these things are familiar to young people almost from the time they can remember, and they leave a strong and magnificent impression on the fancy. As we grow older and become acquainted with the particular details of history, we begin to perceive with surprise that this splendid array of great names and great achievements has another and a far different aspect. On looking nearer, we behold on the throne of England, a woman whose avarice and jealousy, whose envious, relentless, and malignant spirit, whose coarse manners and violent temper, render her detestable ; whose pedantry and meanness, whose childish vanity and intense selfishness, render her contemptible. We see England, the country of Freedom, ruled as absolutely as any Turkish province by this imperious Sultana and her Grand-

Vizier Burleigh;—we see human blood poured out like water on the scaffold; and persecution, torture, and even death again inflicted for the sake of religion;—we see great men, whose names are the glory of their country, pining in neglect; and a base, unworthy favourite, revelling in power. We read and learn these things with astonishment: we find it difficult to reconcile such apparent contradictions, and are at a loss to conceive whence they could have arisen, and how they could ever have existed. It will therefore be something new and amusing to endeavour to explain and account for them in a clear and comprehensive manner.

Within the century immediately preceding the reign of Elizabeth, occurred the three greatest events which, since the redemption of mankind, have taken place in this our world: the invention of printing, which took place about 1448—the discovery of America in 1492—and the Reformation in 1517. The first, by rendering knowledge more accessible, prepared the way for the two last; and Luther, when he plunged into a sea of difficulties and dangers, to bring to light the errors of the Church of Rome, was as bold a man as Columbus, when he launched on the wide Atlantic in search of unknown worlds. The Reformation, and the discovery of America,

were destined to produce a wonderful and beneficial effect on posterity; yet the immediate result of both was similar and sad; both began by causing much crime, and bloodshed, and strife betwixt man and man, at the same time that they roused and called into action energies hitherto unknown. The first wild, agitating ferment, was beginning to subside into a bold, settled activity; and the light which had been struggling through clouds of violence and ignorance began to shine forth with a steady splendour, when Elizabeth, under happy and glorious auspices, ascended the throne, and being thus, by position and accident, a conspicuous person in an illustrious age, what wonder is it that a part of its glory fell upon her, as the most prominent objects catch and reflect most brightly the light around them?

RELIGION.—During the life of her sister Mary, Elizabeth was suspected of favouring the Reformed doctrines; but she outwardly conformed herself to all the ceremonies of the Romish Church, and she afterwards gave sufficient proof, that in her secret soul she was no more of a real Protestant than her father. When she first came to the throne, she had not, apparently, decided on the course she was to pursue in matters of religion. She sent the usual dutiful notification of her accession to the Court of Rome; and had the reigning Pontiff

returned a benignant answer, there is no knowing what might have been the consequences, at least for the time ; but Paul IV. (Caraffa) an arrogant, fiery-spirited old man, assumed, on this occasion, a tone which he thought became the infallible representative of St. Peter. He thundered forth his displeasure at her presumption, in daring to assume the crown of England without his permission, and commanded her to submit herself to the Holy See, on pain of excommunication. Elizabeth, never inclined to submit, was alarmed and disgusted. She immediately took the title of Head of the Church, to the great scandal of the Roman Catholics ; and, it may be added, to the great scandal of all religion, considering her sex, her age, and the power she took upon herself at so critical a period. Thenceforward, she was resolved to allow no foreign interference in religious affairs, and there she was right : but neither would she admit of advice from the wise, aged, learned, and virtuous ecclesiastics of her own kingdom ; and here she was wrong, unwise, and presumptuous. The dangers to which she was subjected from her defiance of the Pope, and the resolute spirit with which she met and repelled them, were the foundation of her popularity ; so that she was regarded as the heroine of the English Church, and her accession was long celebrated by the people as

“ the birth-day of the Gospel.”* But assuredly no thought of the Gospel, and its pure and humble principles of action, entered into Elizabeth’s mind in regulating the faith of her subjects. That she had not the slightest idea of toleration in such matters is not surprising, since it is only lately that people have begun to understand and practise it: but her audacity was really extraordinary. She told the Archbishop of Canterbury that she would allow of no deviation from her will, and that “ she was resolved that no man should be suffered to decline either on the left or the right hand from the drawn line limited by her authority and injunctions.”†

In pursuance of this plan, she persecuted both the Roman Catholics and the stricter Protestants, (then first called *Puritans*,) with the most relentless rigour. Two persons were burned in Smithfield; many suffered other infamous and cruel punishments. In the course of fourteen years only, it appears that sixty-one clergymen, forty-seven laymen, and two gentlewomen suffered death on account of religion; and many thousands endured imprisonment, exile, fines, and other miseries.

This odious and short-sighted method of re-

* Miss Aiken, i. p. 320, et seq.

† Hume, v. 454. Appendix.

pressing religious differences, had the usual effect. Elizabeth's excessive severity against the Puritans increased so much the number and strength of that sect, that forty years after the death of Elizabeth they hurled Charles the First from his throne, and shook the throne itself to its foundations. But the queen could not dream of such a consummation: though her wisdom was great, it was confined within a narrow circle by self-will and selfishness. She was guided by expediency, not by the love of truth.* She would allow no innovations in religion but just those which were necessary to separate her effectually from all dependance on the authority of the Roman Church; because her own political existence as a sovereign, nay, her very life, depended on this: but all her feelings and despotic prejudices were on the side of the old religion. Thus, she was most impatient of preachers and preaching. She said "two or three were enough for a whole county." She was an enemy to sermons, and was known to call out in her chapel, and command the preacher to quit a subject that was disagreeable, or an exhortation too bold. She was with difficulty persuaded to allow the communion-table to be substituted for the high altar and crucifix; and when the theatres were first licensed, plays were per-

* Aikin, i. 319.

mitted only on the Sunday, which was then a festival, and not a sabbath. She hated that the clergy should be married, and openly insulted the wife of Archbishop Parker. The archbishop had been chaplain to her mother, Anne Boleyn; and there was nothing in which Elizabeth displayed more good sense and good feeling, than in the favour she showed to all the relations and friends of her unfortunate mother; at the same time, that she refrained from bringing forward the question of her divorce, and buried in silence all that could reflect on the memory of her father. Parker was distinguished by her in the beginning of her reign, and she frequently visited him at his palace at Lambeth. On one of these occasions, when she had been feasted with particular splendour by the archbishop and his wife, she thanked the former with many gracious expressions; then turning to Mrs. Parker, "And you," said she, "*Madam* I may not call you; *Mistress* I am ashamed to call you; so I know not what to call you; but yet I do thank you." Parker himself ended his life in disgrace, because he was not sufficiently subservient to her will. Archbishop Grindal, a most conscientious and worthy prelate, ventured to remonstrate against her religious despotism, as unbecoming, and to remind her that she too was accountable to God, and ought not

to take upon herself to decide points better left to the management of the bishops. Elizabeth was furious; the good archbishop remained in disgrace, and was forbidden to exercise the duties of his office. The anger of Elizabeth continued for five years, during which the prelate was suspended and banished from the court; and then, the old man growing blind, resigned his dignity, and retired: he died in 1583. Elizabeth was then resolved to choose an Archbishop of Canterbury who would neither interfere with her, nor control her. She raised Whitgift to that dignity: a man of a severe and tyrannical spirit, whose sentiments and views agreed with her own. A court called the "High Commission," exercised the same kind of jurisdiction in the reign of Elizabeth, as the dreadful Inquisition in Spain. It was a court instituted to take cognisance of all religious delinquencies, heresy, and contumacy; and its measures were, in reality, quite as arbitrary, though its punishments were neither so cruel, nor so secret, nor so numerous, as those of the Roman Catholic tribunal.

GOVERNMENT.—It must be admitted, that Elizabeth's foreign policy, her wars, treaties, and alliances with the states of Europe, were most admirably managed; and, in particular, the principle of never making war but in self-defence,

cannot be too highly praised : and though it has been asserted that she adhered to this principle from avarice or policy, rather than from christian or feminine feeling, yet let her have all the commendation she deserves, for bequeathing to posterity the proof and the example, that a sovereign may obtain the highest respect and renown, without aspiring to conquest, and leading armies to invade and rob their neighbours. Another characteristic of Elizabeth's government at home and abroad was, its consistency. She was not in the habit of changing her ministers and counsellors with every change of public opinion ; there was no going in or out of office on slight occasions. The same men served her in the same capacities nearly through her reign, and this gave extraordinary stability to all her purposes. Lord Burleigh was her Prime Minister for forty years. His son, Robert Cecil, Walsingham, Throckmorton, and Davison, Secretaries ; Sir Walter Mildmay, Chancellor of the Exchequer ; Sir Francis Knolles, Sir Nicholas Bacon, and his son Francis Bacon, were among the most remarkable and influential of the statesmen of her time. It is true that Sir Christopher Hatton owed his rise to his graceful person, and his skill in dancing ; and that Leicester was indebted for her favour merely to his superficial accomplishments : these, however, were among the few

exceptions. In general she was not governed by caprice in the choice of her ministers, and they were as faithful to her as she was steady to them.

Her chief foreign enemy was Philip the Second, who had married her sister, and afterwards wished to marry herself. Him, though he wielded the power and resources of half the known world, she defied from her little kingdom, and was uniformly successful against him. She assisted the Dutch in their war against the Spanish tyranny; though, when at first they sought her help, and offered her the sovereignty of the Low Countries, she refused them, in terms of contempt, telling them it was unreasonable to have stirred up so great a commotion, merely on account of the mass, and upbraiding them with their rebellion. But she afterwards redeemed herself nobly and wisely, for she found it more politic to combat Philip the Second in Holland than on the soil of her native England. The whole history of this war of liberty against despotism is most interesting, and many of Elizabeth's bravest commanders and most accomplished courtiers distinguished themselves in it, particularly Sir Philip Sidney, who perished at Zutphen; Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby; and Sir Francis Vere. Holland became, in fact, a school of arms for the young nobility. As to Elizabeth's conduct in Scotland and Ireland, it may

truly be said, that her policy towards Scotland was the most perfidious, and towards Ireland the most atrociously cruel and impolitic, that ever was pursued by any Christian sovereign. She hated the latter country, because she derived no revenue from it, and it was a constant source of trouble and expense to her; no measures but those of extreme rigour were resorted to, and accordingly, during her whole reign, we find Ireland a scene of frightful contests and mutual massacre. "The English," says Hume, "instead of inviting the Irish to adopt the more civilized customs of their conquerors, even refused, though earnestly solicited, to communicate to them the privilege of their laws, and every where marked them out as aliens and as enemies. Thrown out of the protection of justice, the natives could find no security but in force; and flying the neighbourhood of cities, which they could not approach with safety, they sheltered themselves in their marshes and forests from the insolence of their inhuman masters. Being treated like wild beasts, they became such; and joining the ardour of revenge to their untamed barbarity, they grew every day more intractable and more dangerous."*

The Lord-Deputy (as the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland was called in those days) had a most

* Hume, v. 396.

difficult part to act. All Elizabeth's generals and courtiers abhorred the Irish service, for it procured them neither thanks nor reputation. They never could succeed in pleasing their imperious mistress, who demanded unrelenting rigour on their part, and the slightest remissness of severity was construed into high treason. If the revenue fell short, she swore at them all for "idle knaves;" and the discussion of the Irish affairs was sure to produce a fit of ill-temper. The most celebrated of these deputies were, Sir Henry Sidney; Lord Gray; Walter, Earl of Essex; and Sir John Perrot. The latter, who was the most enlightened and humane of them all, had nearly been brought to the block in consequence of his Irish administration. The young favourite, Essex, and the gallant Lord Mountjoy, also commanded in Ireland, much to their own discontent, and not much to the content of their queen.

As for the domestic government of Elizabeth, it was prudent, firm, and vigilant, on the principle of self-preservation and self-interest, rather than of enlightened benevolence. To increase her revenues, to increase her power, to govern without a parliament, to preserve the country from all enemies without, and her throne and person from all enemies within;—these were the principles on which she acted, and these the ends

she pursued. But to spread instruction among her subjects, to extend freedom, to “scatter blessings round the land;” these formed no part of her plan. She referred every thing to *self*. Her best qualities fitted her to take the helm of government in times when it required a strong hand to grasp the sceptre. She was at once fearless and cautious, firm and artful, frugal and ostentatious; she could trample down pride, repel presumption, retort insult, and defy danger. But when did she comfort or help the weak-hearted? or raise up the fallen? or exalt humble merit? or cherish unobtrusive genius? or spare the offending? or pardon the guilty?—The numbers that perished in her reign for high treason exceed belief; nor is it necessary to shock young readers with the details; it is sufficient just to mention that eight hundred persons were hanged after the “Rising in the North.”* Yet Elizabeth did not think that due severity had been exercised; and the Earl of Sussex, who commanded there, complains of the “hangman’s office” to which he had been called, and the difficulty of giving content at court. If the horrid butchering barbarity of some of these executions, as those of Arden, Tichborne, and the Babingtons, be imputed to the times, it shows that Elizabeth’s humanity, like her

* Hume.

wisdom, could not go beyond that of the age in which she lived. In spite of her just and real popularity, plots, conspiracies, revolts, were of constant recurrence; and we find the noblest families of that time, the Howards, Fitzalans, Percies, Nevils, Pagets, with their adherents, suffering for high treason, and constantly in open or secret rebellion against her.

Of her arbitrary power, and the extent of her prerogative, some instances are amusing, some astonishing, some disgusting. It was allowed in parliament "that she was *absolute*—that she had the power to release herself from any law—that she was a species of Divinity."* Her *proclamation*—that is, the public expression of her royal will—was equal in effect to the law of the land. By one of these proclamations, her subjects were forbidden to wear their ruffs more than a quarter of a yard in width, and their rapiers more than a yard long. It was in vain the preachers thundered against the "Devil's kingdom of great ruffs," as it was called in those days; and Elizabeth, although most partial to this appendage of dress, as we may see from her pictures, was determined not to allow her people to go beyond the degree of extravagance and absurdity she thought becoming to herself. Officers were appointed to tear

* Hume, v. 463—441.

the ruffs and break the rapiers of those who transgressed the queen's edict against them. This reminds us of the Czar Peter shaving off the beards of his loving subjects by means of official barbers.

There is a proclamation inserted in Burney's History of Music, by which any private musician, any singing man or boy who excelled in his art, might be pressed into the service of the Royal Chapel. Another prohibits the cultivation of woad, a plant most useful and valuable in our manufactures, because her Majesty disliked the smell of it. These and some other acts of capricious power, may sound rather ludicrous than terrible, but at the time were productive of much private loss and misery. By another proclamation, if there was an affray or riot in the streets, the provost-marshal might seize an offender, and hang him up without farther trouble.

In Parliament, it happened almost every session that members were arrested and sent to the Tower for too great freedom of speech;* and sometimes she would "rate the Commons soundly," and they, like beaten children, submitted; complimented her on her saving grace and all-preventing goodness, and offered up the "last breath of their nostrils, and the last drop of blood in their hearts, to be breathed forth, to be poured

* Hume, v. 463.

out for her safety." None of the nobility could marry, and no man could travel out of England, without the royal permission. These prerogatives were claimed both by her predecessors and successors, but were exercised by Elizabeth with peculiar rigour in many cases. Lord Hertford was imprisoned during nine years for contracting a marriage displeasing to her.* The accomplished Earl of Southampton for four years entreated permission to marry Elizabeth Vernon, a beautiful girl of the court, and cousin to his friend Lord Essex. The queen could not be induced to consent, and when, wearied by this tyranny, they had recourse to a secret marriage, she caused them

* With Lady Catherine Gray, younger sister of Lady Jane Gray, and after her death, the heiress of her pretensions to the Crown; which was enough to awaken Elizabeth's jealousy. The history of Lord and Lady Hertford is a complete Romance, and a very tragical one: it may be found briefly related in Hume; more at length in Miss Aikin's *Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth*; and in Ellis's *Collection* are several letters from or concerning this most unfortunate Lady Catherine, some of which cannot be perused without the most painful compassion, mingled with horror of that tyrannous abuse of power and selfish cruelty of which she was the victim. She died broken-hearted in consequence of the unrelenting rigour of Elizabeth, and her long separation from her husband, entreating with her last breath that the Queen would graciously "send liberty to him, as the only thing that could alleviate his sorrow for her loss." Lord Hertford was not liberated till five years after her death.

to be separated, and sent to the Tower for several months. Many other instances of the same kind of petty and vexatious despotism and envious temper might easily be enumerated.

COMMERCE.—Manufactures, trade, and navigation, made great progress in Elizabeth's reign : but her encouragement of commerce went no farther than the mere improvement of her revenues by the shortest means, and these means were so far from being beneficial in themselves, or worthy of a wise and enlightened sovereign, that they strike us as exceedingly barbarous.* For instance, she would sell to certain individuals the privilege of dealing in some particular commodity ; and for any other person to sell it was as illegal as smuggling is now. This was called a monopoly. It was as if, in these days, one individual alone had a right to sell sugar, and all other persons were obliged to go to his shop and buy it of him at any price he might choose to put on it. But in Elizabeth's time, there were monopolies of salt, coals, iron, lead, and tin ; oil and vinegar, glass, brushes, beer, wine, leather ; in short, fifty or sixty articles among the comforts and even necessities of life, which were thus in the hands of one dealer, who could alone supply all others. To Lord Essex the Queen gave the

* Hume, v. 477.

monopoly of wines. It should be observed, that not only the high prices of these things thus became a great hardship, and discouraged the use of them, but the right of the monopolist to search the houses of those who were suspected of having these commodities illegally, gave rise to the most intolerable private and public oppression ever known in a country which had the least pretensions to be called *free*. The grandest of these monopolies, that of the East India Company, by which a certain set of persons had the exclusive right of trading to certain countries, has lasted to our time.

The religious persecutions in France and the Netherlands, induced many manufacturers in woollen and cutlery to settle here. Elizabeth generously and wisely encouraged them; and we date the rise of our manufactures from her reign. Spilman set up the first paper-mill at Dartford, in 1590. Watches and coaches were first introduced. It appears that the first coach was brought from Holland by William Boonen, a Dutchman, in 1564, who was Queen Elizabeth's coachman. "And, indeed," says a contemporary, "a coach was a strange monster in those days, and the sight of it put both horse and man into amazement; some said it was a great crab-shell brought

out of China; and some imagined it to be one of the Pagan temples in which the cannibals adored the Devil." But in spite of these strange doubts and fears, the use of coaches soon became general, and even (as it was deemed) "excessive and superfluous." When we hear of Elizabeth riding to the House of Peers on a pillion in the beginning of her reign, we should not forget that towards the end of it she is represented as taking an airing in her coach every day.

The trade with Turkey and Russia first began in the reign of Elizabeth; she was the first sovereign who sent ambassadors to these courts.

The trade to the Mediterranean and Levant was also carried on to a great extent, and was the means of introducing into England the common use of luxuries and conveniences before unknown. Mirrors and drinking-glasses from Venice were now met with in the citizens' houses; but it was regarded as a piece of splendour truly royal, when Elizabeth ordered her bath-room at Windsor to be wainscoted with Venetian looking-glass. The first porcelain seen in England was the cargo of a Spanish carrack taken on its return from the East Indies, and it excited great admiration. The use of Damask table-linen was introduced about the same time from Holland; before that time tables were covered with woollen carpets or tapes-

try, such as we see in the old pictures. In the midst of these improvements and luxuries, the use of *forks* remained unknown, and Queen Elizabeth ate with her fingers.*

It is a vulgar idea that Elizabeth's maids of honour breakfasted on beef-steaks and ale, and that wine was such a rarity as to be sold only by apothecaries as a cordial. The *science* of good living was as well understood in those days as it is now, though the *fashion* might be somewhat different; the nobility had French cooks, and among the dishes enumerated, we find "not only beef, mutton, veal, lamb, kid, pork, rabbit, capon, pig;" but also red, or fallow deer, and great variety of fish and wild fowl, with pastry and creams, Italian confections, and preserved fruits, and sweetmeats from Portugal; nay, we are even told of cherries served up at "twenty shillings a pound."† The variety of wines can hardly be exceeded even at present; for a writer of Elizabeth's time mentions fifty-six different kinds of French wine, and thirty-six Spanish and Italian wines imported into England. Dainties for the table were among the offerings which Elizabeth's courtiers and ladies were in the habit of present-

* The use of forks was first introduced from Italy in the beginning of the next reign, about 1616.

† Drake's Shakspeare, vol. ii. 127, et seq.

ing to her; but it is just to add, that she was herself temperate, though nice in her eating. Her household appears to have been maintained with becoming splendour, and there was in particular a good allowance of wine for the inferior tables.*

In navigation, almost every thing was achieved by private industry and enterprise, though Elizabeth and her government had the glory and the praise. Numbers of noblemen and gentlemen, who fitted out vessels at their own expense, either to trade with America and the South of Europe, or to attack the Spaniards, contributed to form excellent sailors, and nourish a spirit of daring enterprise, which prepared the future greatness of our navy. The Earl of Cumberland, Drake, Hawkins, Raleigh, Cavendish, Davis, (who discovered Davis's Straits,) were among the most distinguished of these bold and brave men. Sir Francis Drake was the first of mortals who sailed entirely round the world, for Magellan, who made the first attempt, died before he had completed the voyage.

LEARNING AND ARTS.—With regard to the state of learning, it has been truly said, that this Queen, who understood Latin and Greek, and

* Towards the latter end of her reign, her parsimony seems to have extended even to the details of her household: "At court, ill-breeding and *ill-feeding*," says the epigrammatic Harrington.

spoke several languages of Europe, was much fonder of displaying her own learning, than encouraging the learned.* But her reign is considered the golden period of our literature; and the English language was then written with such purity, strength, and elegance, that the best writers of that time, as Shakspeare, Bacon, Sidney, Raleigh, Hooker, are now regarded as models of style, and prepared the way for that magnificent standard of our language, the English Bible, which was completed in the next reign. The letters of the unhappy Earl of Essex, though he was no author, are exquisite specimens of style. Queen Elizabeth's own compositions show that she was excelled as a writer by all the leading personages of her court. Some of her short letters have indeed a degree of coarse energy, if that be any merit; but in general, her prose is involved, obscure, and stiff, far unlike that of her elegant rival, Mary Stuart, who wrote English well, and whose French style might be taken as a model of the language in those times. Of her verse, a contemporary flatterer assures us that the queen's "learned, delicate, and noble muse, easily surmounteth all the rest that have written before her time or since, for sense, sweetness, and subtiltie, be it ode, elegie, epigram, or any other kind of

* Hume.

poeme, heroick or lyricke, wherein it shall please her majesty to employ her penne, even by as much oddes as her own excellent estate and degree exceedeth all the rest of her most humble vassals.”*

It is worth while to quote a specimen of the contemptible trash on which this eulogium was bestowed :—the following lines are the commencement of her best poem.

“ That doubt of future foes exiles my future joy ;
 And wit me warns to shun such snares as threaten mine
 annoy :
 For Falsehood now doth flow, and subjects’ faith doth ebb,
 Which would not be, if Reason ruled, or Wisdom weaved
 the webb ;
 But clouds of toys untry’d do cloak aspiring minds,
 Which turn to rain, of late repent, by course of changed
 winds.
 The top of hope suppos’d the root of ruth will be,
 And fruitless all their graffed guiles, as shortly ye shall see :”
 &c. &c.

The treatment which Spenser met with in her court,—Spenser, who exalted her in his “ Faery Queen,” and celebrated her in strains divine to hear,—is well known ; he pined away “ with crosses and with cares,” and died in neglect and poverty. Raleigh and Sidney had been his patrons, as Essex and Southampton were the friends and patrons of Shakspeare ; whatever countenance the Queen bestowed on the two greatest men

* Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie*.

of her time, was through the influence of these favourites.

Music was much in fashion in Elizabeth's court ; we are told that most of her ladies " studied prick-song," that is, the theory of music ; Elizabeth herself played well on the virginals, (a kind of spinet or small harpsichord)—so far, as Camden justly observes, " as might *become* a Princess." It appears that she excelled the Queen of Scots on keyed instruments, but Mary played better on the lute. Queen Elizabeth's music-book is still extant, and the pieces contained in it are more remarkable for their difficulty than their beauty. A little instrument called the *gittern*, or *cittern*, which appears to have resembled a small guitar, was in fashion as an accompaniment to the voice. Laneham, one of the courtiers, and a dependant of Lord Leicester, thus describes his own playing on the cittern. " And to say truth, what with mine eyes, with my Spanish sospires, my French heighos, mine Italian dulcets, my Dutch hoves, my double releas, my high reaches, my fine feigning, my deep diapason, my wanton warbles, my running, my timing, my tuning, and my twinkling, I can gracify the matter as well as the proudest of them."

The principal musician of Elizabeth's time was William Bird, Organist of Lincoln, the composer

of the beautiful and well known canon, *Non nobis Domine*; and it is worthy of remark, that in her reign we find the first introduction of Italian music into England, and the first mention of English words adapted to Italian airs. Church music and the science of harmony were principally cultivated; the fashionable style of vocal music was the madrigal for three or four voices, and it was extremely elaborate and artificial. Shakspeare complains that the simple old ballad airs were banished for this new style of Italian music; at the same time that he appears to have been most sensible to its real beauty. He has celebrated a lutenist of the name of Dowland.

Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense.*

There was a collection of songs in praise of Queen Elizabeth, called the "Triumphs of Oriana," set to music by the most eminent composers of her reign, and among them we find the name of John Milton, the father of the great poet.

Painting and Architecture received but little patronage in Elizabeth's reign. She was fond of multiplying pictures of herself, and so far, and no farther, did she encourage painting. One of her most curious and characteristic ordinances is a

* See Shakspeare's Sonnets.

proclamation prohibiting all manner of persons from drawing, painting, graving, &c., her majesty's person and visage, till some perfect pattern and example should be prepared by a skilful limner, "for the consolation of her majesty's loving subjects, who were grieved, and took great offence at the errors and deformities committed by sundry persons in this respect." Yet her painters do not appear to have flattered her as much as her poets.* The portraits remaining of Elizabeth (and they are numerous) show how vile, how tawdry, and how vulgar was her taste in art; they could hardly be fine enough to please her; they seem all made up of jewels, crowns, and frizzled hair, powdered with diamonds, and "ruffs, and cuffs, and farthingales and things;" and from the midst of this superfluity of ornament, her pinched Roman nose, thin lips, and sharp eyes, peer out with a very disagreeable effect, quite contrary to all our ideas of grace or majesty. She was so little capable of judging a work of art, that she would not allow a painter to put any shadows upon the face, "because," as she said "shade is an accident, and not in nature;"—this was like the Chinese, who tried to wipe off the shadows from the picture of George the Third, which had been sent out as a present to the Emperor of China, being

* Walpole.

persuaded, like Queen Elizabeth, that they could only have come there by accident. Yet her reign, destined to be every way illustrious, produced the first native painter of distinguished eminence in Isaac Oliver, one of the most admirable miniature-painters who ever existed, for he has not since been surpassed in his own style of art. Frederick Zuccherro, a celebrated Italian painter, visited England in 1574, and painted Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, who sat to him while in confinement at Hardwicke, and several persons of the court. Hilliard, an English painter, remarkable for the neatness of his execution and total want of taste, was Elizabeth's favourite painter, and she often sat to him. Lucas de Heere, who painted many portraits of her time, was a Fleming. There were no artists of eminence in any department but portrait-painting. Sir Nathaniel Bacon, the brother of the great Lord Bacon, is the first English gentleman on record who cultivated painting as an amateur; that is, merely from a love of the art; and some of his pictures which remain, show that he pursued it successfully.

Architecture was even in a worse state than painting, although a mania for building seems to have prevailed among the nobility of that time. The style was magnificent, but the taste ungraceful and barbarous. "In more ancient times,"

says Walpole, “ the mansions of the great Lords were built for defence and strength, rather than convenience, The walls thick, the windows pierced wherever it was most necessary for them to look abroad, instead of being contrived for symmetry or to illuminate the chambers: to that style succeeded the richness and delicacy of the Gothic. As this declined, before the Grecian taste was established, space and vastness seem to have made their whole ideas of grandeur. The palaces erected in the reign of Elizabeth by the memorable Countess of Shrewsbury,* are exactly in this style. The apartments are lofty and enormous; and they knew not how to furnish them: pictures, had they had good ones, would be lost in chambers of such height; tapestry, their chief moveable, was not commonly perfect enough to be real magnificence; fretted ceilings, graceful mouldings of windows, and painted glass, the ornaments of the preceding age, were fallen into disuse. Immense lights, composed of bad glass in diamond panes, cast an air of poverty on their most costly apartments.” The most splendid specimens of this style of architecture remaining to us are, Hardwicke; Burleigh House, the seat of Lord Exeter; Holland House, at Kensington; and Hatfield, the

* The same who had the charge of Mary Queen of Scots: she built Hardwicke, Chatsworth, &c.

seat of Lord Salisbury. An immense gallery, and vast projecting windows, were the general features of the great mansions erected in this age. John Thorpe was the principal architect. Inigo Jones was born in Elizabeth's reign, but did not rise to any eminence in his profession till some years after her death; he returned from Italy with his imagination full of Michel Angelo and Palladio, and designed the palace of Whitehall.

The grandfather of Elizabeth left us one of the most splendid monuments of Gothic architecture in the kingdom, Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster. Her father founded a college and built a palace; her brother endowed the finest school and hospital in England, memorials worthy of his amiable character. Elizabeth left behind her no monument of her taste, her munificence, or her benevolence; she left three thousand gowns in her wardrobe.

With regard to the state of morals and manners in Elizabeth's court, the first were not better, and the latter not worse, than in other courts of that time. The system of corruption was open and gross, for not only favour, but justice, was to be bought and sold. When we read that Lord Bacon was disgraced in the following reign for accepting, or allowing his servants to accept, of bribes in his office, we are at first filled with pity,

surprise, and even consternation, that a man so wise and so great, to whom God gave a spirit to comprehend the universe, who was the Columbus of modern philosophy,—that *he* should thus so poorly degrade himself; but we find that in the court in which he was educated, and passed his early probation as a statesman, it was the common and general practice. Elizabeth scrupled not to accept of bribes herself to induce her to influence her own counsellors and judges;* and no man thought of furthering a suit at court or at law without a present in his hand. We will give one serious and one amusing instance out of hundreds. The Archbishop of York wished to procure the pardon of an unfortunate man, who (let it be remarked) was innocent. But he petitioned in vain; “And therefore,” writes the archbishop, “I being put in mind that all was not done in that court for God’s sake only, sent up twenty French crowns of mine own purse as a small remembrance for a poor man’s pardon, which was thankfully accepted of. There is some fault somewhere; I know it is not in her Majesty, of whom I will say, as the prophet David speaketh of God, ‘Hath Queen Elizabeth forgotten to be gracious, and is her mercy come to an end for evermore?’ the whole world knoweth the contrary.” At the

* Miss Aikin, ii. p. 408.

time of the date of this letter, the good archbishop had been suing this pardon in vain for nine months, for a man whose only crime was, that he had *once* been a Papist, though now converted, and a good Protestant ;—and whether the twenty crowns at length availed is not ascertained.

When Sir John Harrington came up to town about a lawsuit, he made a memorandum of the best manner of proceeding. In these days, if a man were going to law about an estate, he would probably go to Lincoln's Inn, choose an acute and eloquent lawyer to manage his case, pay him the proper fee, and leave the rest to the judges. Harrington took a different method. His first care was to please her Majesty in the cut of his coat; for as she had formerly spit on the dress of a courtier which had displeased her, this was of some consequence. He then proceeds, "I must go in an early hour, before her highness hath special matters brought up to counsel on. I must go before the breakfast covers are placed, and stand uncovered as her highness cometh forth her chamber, and kneel and say, God save your Majesty! I crave your ear at what hour may suit for your servant to meet your blessed countenance? thus will I gain her favour to follow to the auditory." He afterwards says in an-

other place, " Yet I will adventure to give her Majesty five hundred pounds in money and some pretty jewel, or garment, as you shall advise, only praying her Majesty to further my suit with some of her learned counsel." These were some of the means by which people obtained justice in the reign of " Good Queen Bess."

We learn that the daily ceremonial of her court was distinguished by " Oriental servility." Her table was served kneeling, and with as many genuflexions as would have contented the Emperor of China. Even her ministers never addressed her but on their knees; from this slavish ceremony, Lord Burleigh was latterly excused, when age and infirmities had rendered it painful, or rather impracticable, but he was the only exception.

With as much real power, with as much real greatness, as would have satisfied any mortal, (but that with power in every shape, "*l'appetit vient en mangeant* ;") with talents and strength of character that ought to have commanded real and heartfelt respect, Elizabeth would stoop to the most childish rivalry with the women of her own court; and, like a spoiled infant, was miserable, unless she were the sole source of all favour, the centre of all attraction, and the object of all

adoration. Her maids of honour were sometimes the victims of this petty jealousy, which descended even to dress.

There was among her attendants a young girl of rank, (Lady Mary Howard,) remarkable for her beauty and her liveliness, who had attracted the notice of Essex and others of the courtiers, and consequently became the object of the queen's vindictive displeasure, and the victim of those arts of tormenting in which her Majesty excelled.

“It happened,” relates Sir John Harrington, “that Lady M. Howard was possessed of a rich border, powdered with golde and pearle, and a velvet suite belonging thereto, which moved many to envye; nor did it please the queene, who thought it exceeded her own. One daye the queene did sende privately, and got the lady's rich vesture, which she put on herself, and came forth the chamber among the ladies; the kirtle and border was far too shorte for her majestie's height; and she asked every one how they liked her new-fancied suit? At length she asked the owner herself, ‘if it was not made too short and ill-becoming?’ which the poor ladie did presentlie consent to. ‘Why, then, if it become not me as being too shorte, I am minded it shall never become thee, as being too fine; so it fitteth neither

well.' This sharpe rebuke abashed the ladie, and she never adorned herself herewith any more."

The story of Lady Mary Howard is thus continued in one of Fenton's letters. "I have not seen her highnesse, save twice, since Easter last, bothe of which times she spake most vehemently and with great warmth of her servant, the Lady Marie Howard, forasmuche as she refused to bear her mantle at the hour her highnesse is wonted to air in the garden, and on small rebuke did vent such unseemlie answer as did breede much choler in her mistress. Again, on other occasion, she was not ready to carry the cup of grace, during the dinner in the privie-chamber; nor was she attending at the hour of her majestie's going to prayer. All which doth now so disquiet her highnesse, that she swore she would no more show her any countenance, but out with all such ungracious, flouting wenches; because, forsooth, she hath much favour and marks of love from the young Earle, which is not pleasing to the queene, who doth still much exhort all her women to remain in virgin state as much as may be. I ventured to say as far as discretion did go in defence of our friende, and did urge much in behalf of youth and enticing love, which did often abate of right measures in fair ladies; and more-

over related what ever might please the queene, touching the confession of her great kindness to her sister Jane before her marriage; all which did nothing soothe her highnesse' anger, saying, 'I have made her my servante, and she will now make herself my mistress; but in good faith, William, she shall not, and so tell her.' In short, pitie doth move to save this ladie, and would beg such suite to the queene from you and your friends, as may win her favour to spare on future amendmente." "It might not be amisse to talk to this younge ladie to be more dutiful, and not absent at meals or prayers; to bear her highnesse mantle and other furniture, even more than all the rest of the servants, to make ample amendes by future diligence, and always to go first in a morninge to her highnesse chamber, forasmuch as such kindnesse will much prevail to turn awaie all former displeasure: she must not entertaine my lord the earl in any conversation, but shunne his companie; and moreover, be less careful in attiring her own person, for this seemeth as done more to win the earl, than her mistress' good will. * * * * If we consider the favour showed her familie, there is ground for ill humour in the queene, who doth not now bear with such composed spirit as she was wont; but, since the Irish affairs, seemeth

more froward than commonlie she used to bear herself toward her women; nor doth she hold them in discourse with such familiar matter, but often chides for small neglects, in such wise as to make these fair maids often cry and bewail themselves in piteous sort, as I am told by my sister Elizabeth.”*

Like her father, the big and bluff King Harry, Elizabeth knew how to unite a certain coarse familiarity with the most unfeeling despotism, and the most peremptory self-will. But with the imperious disposition of the Tudors, she inherited also their intrepidity, and had a good deal of strength of nerve as well as strength of mind; immediate and present peril never seems to have daunted her. The gross adulation, the unmeasured flattery she received from her courtiers, is at once ludicrous and disgusting, and proves the vulgar depravity of taste in her, who not only endured, but exacted it. With all her extravagant personal vanity, her real sagacity could not have been deceived; she was not so blind but that the sight of her own face in a mirror, when she began to grow old, threw her into “ transports of impotent rage.”† She must have seen, and she did see,

* Vide *Nugæ Antiquæ* by Parke.

† Towards the end of her life she discontinued the use of a looking-glass; and it is even said that her tire-women,

that all the flattery addressed to her was false, and hollow, and self-interested; but it was a tribute become necessary to her, and she enjoyed it with a perverted consciousness of her own power, that could thus force the herd of flatterers around her to belie their own eyes and understanding, and address her as a sacred goddess, a Venus, or nymph, at the age of sixty-five. It is very curious, and at the same time very pitiable, to contrast this extorted adulation with the confidential communications of her ministers and attendants; with their complaints of incessant, hard, and often unrewarded service; of her Majesty's "grievous rating," and "marvellous choler;" their congratulating each other when she condescended to be "reasonably quiet;" her swearing at her ministers,* and frowning at her ladies, beating "the fair Bridges," and other maids of honour; swearing at Lady Arundel, and pinching poor Lady Huntingdon "very sorely;"—what should we now think of any female of rank and education who conduct—
"confident in their mistress's prejudice against her mirror, sometimes indulged their own hatred and mirth, and ventured to lay upon the royal nose the carmine which ought to have embellished the cheeks."

* Ritson has given a list of Queen Elizabeth's habitual oaths, which is more strange than edifying: and of one tremendous asseveration, he observes, "she had it as often in her mouth as a fishwoman."

ed herself with such extraordinary indecorum? Even worse than this was her extreme duplicity in the relations of private life. One of the most revolting traits recorded of her, is that mentioned by her godson Harrington, who appears to have perfectly understood her character, and to have respected and admired her talents and her better qualities. "Her mind," he says, "was oftime like the gentle air that cometh from the westerly point in a summer's morn; it was sweet and refreshing to all around her: again, she could put forth such alterations, as left no doubting whose daughter she was. By art and nature together so blended, it was difficult to find her right humour at any time, for few knew how to aim their shaft against her cunning." "I have seen her smile, forsooth, with great semblance of good liking to all around, and cause every man to open his most inward thought to her; when, on a sudden, she would ponder in private on what had passed, write down all their opinions, draw them out as occasion required, and sometimes disprove to their faces what had been delivered a month before. Hence, she knew every one's part; and by thus *fishing*, as Hatton said, she caught many poor fish, who little knew what snare was laid for them."

Harrington also bears witness to her extraor-

dinary power of overawing all who approached her. In describing an interview he had with her when her "gracious disposition" had been, as usual, distempered by the Irish affairs under Essex, he adds, "Until I come before Heaven I shall never come before a statelier judge again, nor one that can temper majesty, wisdom, learning, choler and favour better than her Highness did at that time."—"At last I was bid 'go home;' I did not stay to be told twice. If all the Irish rebels had been at my heels, I should not have had better speed; for I did now flee from one whom I loved and feared too."

It has been said that Elizabeth never forgot the woman in the sovereign: it might be said with much more truth, that she never forgot the sovereign in the woman, and surely this is no praise.—One more destitute of what is called *heart*, that is, of the capacity for all the gentle, generous, and kindly affections proper to her sex, cannot be imagined in the female form. We hear of her "lion-like port;" but woman-like or Christian-like formed no part of her character: accordingly, we find that she passed through life without a friend, with the sense to know it, and yet with the folly and the pride to imagine that her station placed her above that want.

Robert Cecil, the son of the celebrated Lord

treasurer Burleigh, possessed, towards the close of her reign, the unbounded confidence of Elizabeth, as her principal secretary of state and prime minister, and betrayed his trust. He carried on a secret correspondence with the King of Scots and his ministers, in which every secret of Elizabeth's court and cabinet was divulged. If this treachery had transpired, it would certainly have cost him his head; and on one occasion his acuteness and presence of mind saved him, when on the verge of ruin. The anecdote is characteristic both of Elizabeth and her minister. "Elizabeth was taking the air in a carriage, where Cecil occupied a seat, when one of the royal posts passed them. 'From whence?' the queen demanded; and the answer was, 'From Scotland.'—'Give me your packet,' said the queen. It was delivered accordingly.—'Open it,' said she to Cecil, 'and show me the contents.' As the packet contained some part of Cecil's correspondence with the King of Scots, the command placed the crafty statesman within view of ruin and the scaffold. To have attempted to suppress or subtract any of the papers which the packet contained, would have been a hazardous experiment in the presence of the most sharp-sighted and jealous of sovereigns. Cecil's presence of mind found an expedient. 'This packet,' said he, as he pulled his knife out

to cut the strings with which it was secured, ‘has an uncommon odour, and must have been in some filthy budgets.’ The queen was alarmed: she had been all her life delicate in the sense of smelling, and was apprehensive of poison, which the age believed could be communicated by that organ. ‘Take it,’ she said to Cecil, ‘and let it be aired before the contents are presented to us.’ The wily secretary obeyed her commands, and obtained the desired opportunity to withdraw such papers as he deemed it important to conceal.”*

Of her two celebrated favourites, the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Essex, the first was a most weak and worthless man, contemned and feared by her nobles, odious to her people; yet, in spite of all his vices and incapacity, he died, as he had lived, a favourite; and his influence for nearly thirty years can hardly be reconciled with the general idea of Elizabeth’s wisdom and penetration. Her partiality for Essex seems to have been the dotage of a vain old woman. She could not appreciate his fine qualities; she would not make allowances for his faults; and he was too frank and spirited to cringe at her footstool. The memorable box on the ear he received from her, would have been nothing from a woman; from an angry

* Vide Sir Walter Scott’s History of Scotland.

sovereign it was intolerable. "Let those," he exclaimed, "that mean to make their profit of princes, show no sense of princes' injuries! Let *them* acknowledge an infinite absoluteness on earth, that do not believe an infinite absoluteness in heaven. I owe her majesty the duty of an earl, but I will never serve her as a villain and a slave!" Essex was too rash and unsuspecting to be a match for the cool, calculating, wily ministers, whose interest it was to destroy him out of their way, not only as the favourite of the present sovereign, but as likely to be all-powerful with her successor; and partly by their arts, and partly by his own fiery temper, he was brought to the block, in the thirty-fourth year of his age. In the exasperation of offended power and jealous self-will, the queen signed the warrant for his execution; and pined away the remainder of her life in unavailing remorse. Accustomed to perform other acts of severity without any detriment to her peace of mind, she thought she could surmount this pain by the mere force of her will. She was surprised and indignant to find that she could not; and that there was a mighty hand upon her, under which she writhed in vain. She was now aged and feeble; she had survived her old servants and ministers; she was without resources in

herself; she knew she was surrounded by venal, interested men, who only waited till the last gasp had left her frail, care-worn, wrinkled carcase, to crowd round her successor: with all the bitterness of impotent rage and jealousy she felt this, but she “queen’d it” to the last with a sullen dignity. The picture of Elizabeth, the renowned and feared, the idol at home, the terror abroad, lying on her palace-floor, with her finger in her mouth, seeking no support from religion, no consolation from affection;—friendless, helpless, hopeless, comfortless; and thus gradually wasting into death, is such a lesson on the nothingness of power, and the miscalculations of selfishness, that history affords not one more terrible and impressive.

Queen Elizabeth died at Richmond, in 1603, two years after the death of Essex. Her last words were strongly characteristic, and exhibited “the *ruling* passion strong in death.” During her whole life she had shown a perverse dread of naming her successor; but it was necessary that the question should be put to her in her last moments. She replied, “My seat has been the seat of kings, and I will have *no rascal* to succeed me.” (As if all who were not princes were necessarily rascals.) Secretary Cecil boldly asked her what she meant by those words, “that *no rascal should succeed her?*” to which she answered, that

“ She would be succeeded by a king ; and who should that be but the King of Scots ? ” Thus, in a manner, acknowledging the legal rights of Mary Stuart, whom she had hated, and at length put to death, for possessing and maintaining those rights.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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